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Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion,
Belgaum.

*( Founder : Sri Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade )*

# SILVER JUBILEE
# SOUVENIR

Volume I

आत्मा वाऽरे द्रष्टव्य :

( Realise The Self )

Editors

K. D. Sangoram

M. S. Deshpande

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ॐ

अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानाम् ।

( Self-knowledge is Real knowledge )

**Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion, Belgaum.**

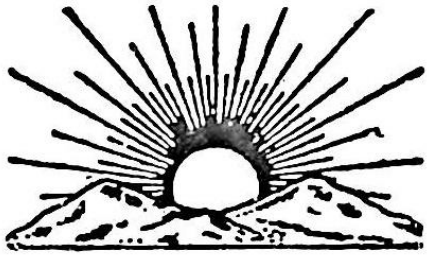
*( Founder : Sri Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade )*

# SILVER JUBILEE

# SOUVENIR

Volume I

( Pillars of Sri Gurudeva's – Sampradaya
and
Heart – Homages to Sri Gurudev.)



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M. S. Deshpande

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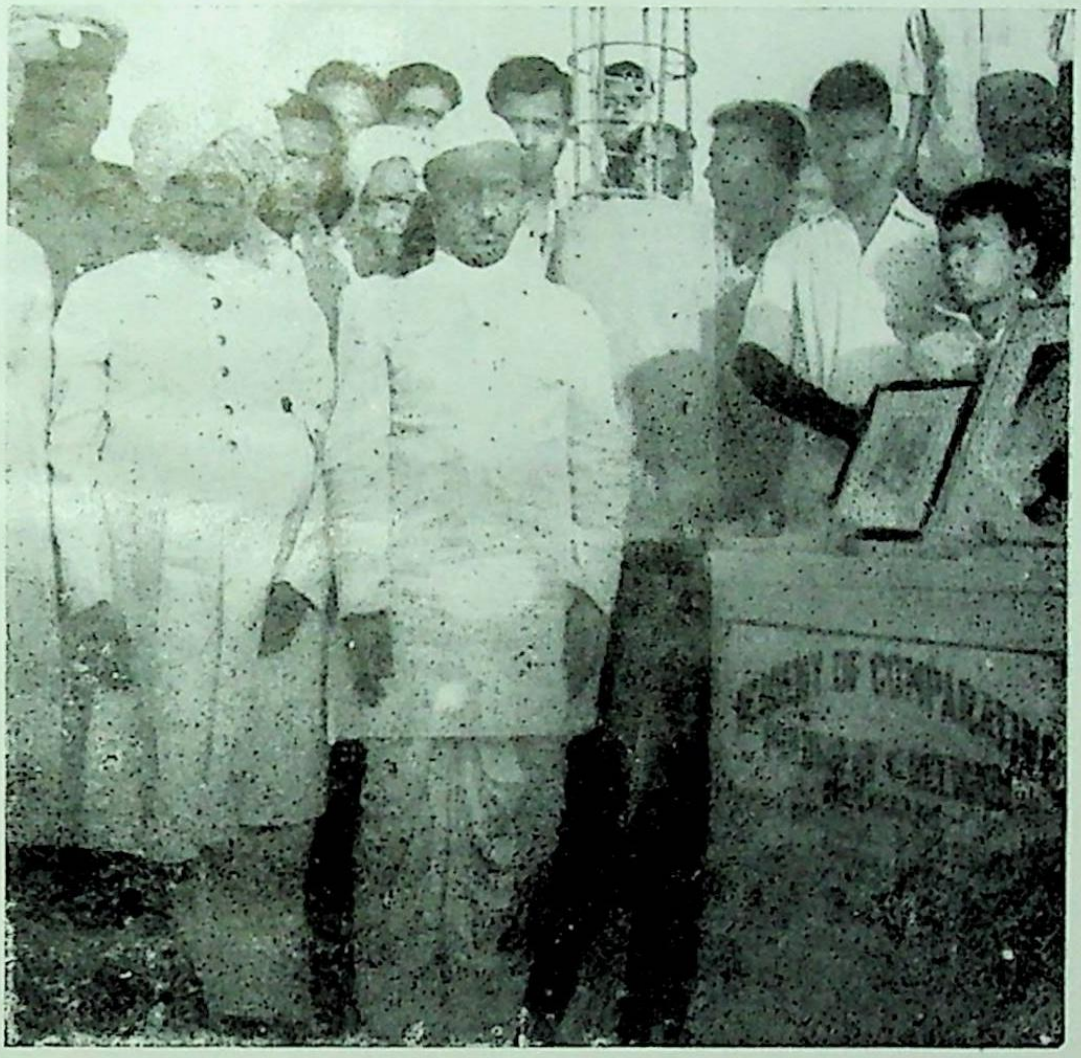
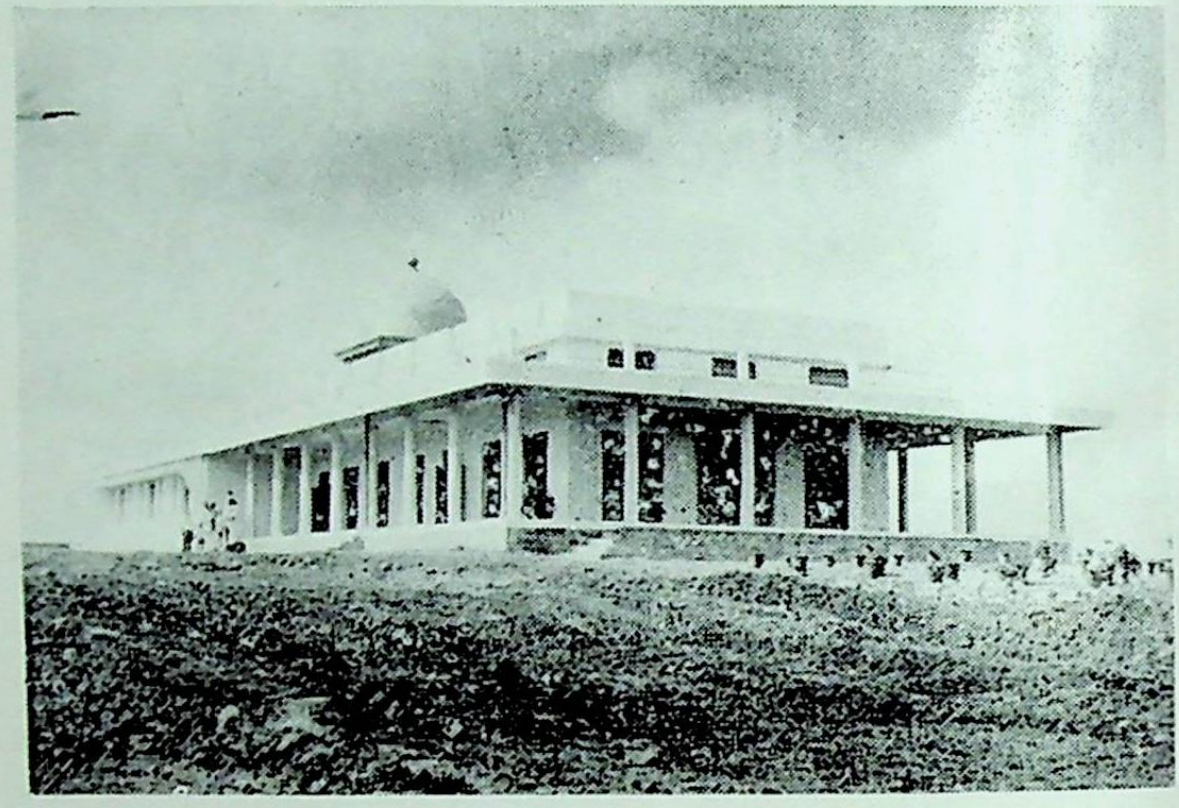


The corner stone of Gurudev Mandir was laid by Shri B. D. Jatti on 16-4-1964 when H. H. Rajasaheb of Sangli presided.

# Gurudev Mandir : Belgaum.



# Preface

## Prelude

This souvenir is being published in connection with the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of our Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion, founded by the great modern Saint, Sri Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade in the year 1952. It consists of two volumes : One dealing with Sri Gurudeva's Sampradaya and Heart-Homages paid to him; and the second with his Philosophy as well as philosophy and Religion in general. This first volume has two parts – The first dealing with the Pillars of the Sampradaya and the second with Heart-Homages paid to Sri Gurudev.

## Our Academy

Before presenting the salient features of this volume, it would be in the fitness of things to recount in brief, i) the Aims and Objects of the Academy, ii) its origin and development and iii) its activities, as the Academy is celebrating its Silver Jubilee this year.

## The Aims and Objects:

What does our Academy stand for ? What are its Aims and Objects as enjoined by Sri Gurudev ? the Academy stands primarily for the propagation, of the Spiritual Ideals and the Philosophy of Life of Sri Gurudev. What were his Spiritual Ideals and Philosophy of Life ? God-realisation through God-devotion was his Supreme Ideal, which he practised and preached throughout his life. To him " The one Spiritual Principle underlying the universe " was God. So, one God, one World, one Religion and one Humanity , was the Ideal which he placed before humanity. " It is only when humanity comes to recognise this Spiritual Principle" he declared, "that there would be harmony and peace among the different races, nations and creeds in the world." And secondly, according to him, "what we experience, what we feel and what we realise should alone constitute our Philosophy ,

and it should "make our life more divine and therefore worth-while living." Moreover, about the function of Philosophy, he also maintained: "I have always believed that the function of Philosophy is for consolidation and consummation of Spiritual Experience; and it is only the acquisition of this Spiritual Experience which makes a man worthy of being the handiwork of God" To This end he has specifically directed the Academy, "to work for the Spiritual Unity of mankind and consequent peace and good will upon Earth;" and for this purpose, he enjoined the Academy to bring together intellectual and spiritually minded persons through Spiritual Symposiums, study and research, lectures, meetings and conferences and philosophical publications.

## Origin and Development.

Our Academy owes its origin to a strong desire of Sri Gurudev to have such an Institution as well as to the gift of thirteen acres of fallow land at Belgaum by H. H. Rajasaheb of Sangli. And it owes its development to the untiring self-less efforts on the part of Sri. J V. Parulekar, a devoted disciple of Sri Gurudev, who was then Deputy Collector at Belgaum.

Soon after the registration of the gift-deed in 1952, Sri Gurudev created a Public Trust entitled "Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion" at Belgaum and entrusted the work of its development mainly to Sri J. V. Parulekar. Many a time he expressed before him his conviction that the Academy would in course of time, grow into a huge Institution with various activities. But as Sri Parulekar was soon transferred from Belgaum, nothing appreciable could be achieved in this respect. It was only when he came to reside permanently at Belgaum after his retirement that he could wholly devote himself to the work of its development.

Sri Gurudev attained Maha Samadhi in 1957. As he was the Sole Trustee and no mention had been made regarding the mode of succession to the trusteeship in the application for the registration of the Trust, the District Judge of Belgaum,

appointed a Board of Trustees with Sri G. V. Tulpule, Retired D. P. M. G as Chairman and Sri J. V. Parulekar, Retired Deputy Collector as Hon-Secretary. The Trust land, which was mostly uneven, was got levelled and was divided into several plots reserving a sufficiently large portion for the purpose of constructing the present Gurudev Mandir. A sizable amount was realised by sale of plots. A portion of it was utilised for constructing the Stately Building–a unique structure in this part–and the rest was deposited in Banks, which formed the nucleus for starting the activities of the Academy. The construction of Gurudev Mandir was completed in 1965, and its inauguration–which was a grand function–took place on 8-12-1965 at the hands of the late Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the then President of India.

## Activities

With a view to give due publicity to the Aims and Objects of the Academy and create interest among the people in the spiritual message of the Masters and Rational Mysticism as expounded by Sri Gurudev, the Trustees decided to carry on the following activities for the present.

## Journal

An Annual Journal entitled "*Pathway to God*" consisting of learned articles by eminent scholars and seekers on various important topics concerning Philosophy, Religion and Culture was started under the auspices of the Academy. The first issue of the "*Pathway to God*" was published in November 1966 on "Vaikuntha Chaturdashi", the day on which Sri Gurudev received spiritual Initiation. It was continued as an Annual Journal for four years, every issue being released on the same "Vaikuntha Chaturdashi" day every year. Since 1970, it was made a Bi-annual journal, the second issue being published on the 6th day of June, the date on which Sri Gurudev attained Maha Samadhi. This arrangement continued till October 1976 and since then, it has been developed into a Quarterly Journal. In response to the demand of

the subscribers, articles in Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi and Kannad are being published recently in the journal.

## Library

A library named " *Gurudev Granthalaya* " has been started by the Academy since 1966. A collection of about one thousand valuable books belonging to late Sri. N. V. Gunaji was received as donation from his heirs. Some books are being added to the library every year through donation as well as fresh purchase. The Granthalaya contains at present about four thousand books— English, Marathi and Kannada. Reading facilities are provided to the members in the Library hall. Arrangement is also made for issuing books to the subscribers on payment of the requisite deposit amount. Many persons have been receiving the benefit of these valuable books.

## Lectures

The Academy has instituted " *Gurudev Ranade Memorial Lectures (series)* " in memory of Sri Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade. Every year a distinguished Scholar is invited to deliver a series of lectures on some important subject of spiritual interest. The lectures are delivered in Gurudev Mandir at Belgaum. They are thereafter published in the form of a book on behalf of the Academy. There have been up till now eight such series of Lectures-six in English and two in Marathi. Out of these, five have been already published in the form of books-four in English and one in Marathi. Following are the subjects of these Memorial lectures.

1) Introduction to the Vedic Study -
   ( by Dr. Sampurnand, Banaras ).
2) Concept of Reality in Bhagvat
   ( by Prof. Aurobindo Basu, Pondichery )
3) Religion in the Changing World-
   ( by Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao, Madras )
4) Moral Philosophy in the light of Bhagvadgita
   ( by Dr. A. G. Javadekar, D. L. M. Baroda )

5) Critical and Constructive Aspects of Prof. Ranade's Philosophy.
( by Prof. B. R. Kulkarni, New Delhi )
6) The Crowning Phase of Religion )
( by Prof. N. G. Damle, Poona )
7) ज्ञानेश्वरांचे तत्त्वज्ञान. ( by Smt: Padma Kulkarni New Delhi )
8) श्री ज्ञानेश्वरांचे आत्मदर्शन.
( by Sri R. N. Saraf, Belgaum ).

## Seminars

Six Seminars have been arranged up till now on the following important subjects. They are :-

1) Validity and Value of Religious Experience;
2) Problem of Evil; 3) The Doctrine of God;
4) God-realisation; Sadhana and Effects.
5) Moral Trends since Independence.

Eminent thinkers and scholars were invited to participate in the seminars. About eight papers dealing with different aspects of the subject were read in every seminar and discussion followed after the reading of each paper. All the seminars proved to be very interesting as well as instructive and attracted a large number of educated audience. All the papers read in the Seminars have been published in the form of books on behalf of the Academy.

## Publications

Besides the books concerning " *Sri Gurudev Ranade Memorial Lectures* " and " *Seminars* ". the Academy has also published seven other books-two English, four in Marathi and one in Kannad Of these seven books three are concerning the Life and Teaching of Sri Gurudev, one regarding Saint Sri Jnaneshwar and one regarding The Life and Teaching of Saint Sri Sivalingava and one more on the philosophy of

Karmayoga.

## Nama - Saptaha

A *Nama - Saptaha* is celebrated every year for five days in Gurudev Mandir, in which sadhakas from different parts of the country participate. The programme mainly consists of Nama-Smarana i e. Meditation on Divine Name with kakad-arati and prayer at Dawn and the Bhajans in the morning, afternoon and night. Discourses on spiritual subjects are also arranged on all the five days.

Besides all the Scheduled Activities of the Academy as mentioned above, the Academy has been arranging several lectures, discourses and kirtans from time to time throughout the year, as and when deserving personalities are available.

## Sri Gurudeva's Sampradaya

We shall now try to deal with a few salient features of the present volume. This volume has been divided into two parts : The first part is taken up with the account regarding the "Pillars of the Sampradaya"- about their brief Life-sketches as well as about their spiritual message; while the second part contains "Heart - Homages" to Sri Gurudev by his admirers, students and disciples.

The Sampradaya of Sri Gurudev is called " Nimbargi Sampradaya " as Sri Nimbargi Maharaj has been it's recent Originator in this part of the country. But it even goes back to Revansiddha or Revan-Nath as he is also called. Hence it appears that Revansiddha assimilated in his teachings the Universal aspects of the teachings of both the Nathas and the Siddhas. Tradition tells us that he had resided at Renagiri in Satara District for some time and came down to Siddnagiri near Kolhapur and lived in the jungle there. According to one tradition he himself was called " Kadasiddha " as he resided in the jungle (kada). According to another tradition his premier disciple was called "Kadasiddha", who established a Math

at Siddha-giri. In the tradition of this Math Muppin-Muni or Muppin-Kadasiddha happens to be the 22nd Pontiff ( Mathadhipati) from whom Sri Nimbargi Maharaj received Spiritual nitiation. Such is in brief the history of this Sampradaya. About this Sampradaya Sri Gurudev had once remarked: "This may be called 'Swarupa-Sampradaya "-a Tradition of " Self-Vision ", which has been adopted since ancient times by seers like Narada, Yajnavalkya and others up to the modern times by saints like Jnaneshwar, Tukaram and Sri Nimbargi Maharaj.

## Main Pillars

There are five great Pillars in this Sampradaya: viz. *i) Sri Nimbargi Maharaj ii)* Sri *Bhausaheb Maharaj, iii) Sri Amburao Maharaj. iv) Smt. Sri Sivalingava and v) Sri Gurudev Rambhau Maharaj.* They include the originator as well as the promoters of this Sampradaya. They contributed greatly to enhance and spread the spiritual glory of the Sampradaya for well-nigh a century. They have been catering to the spiritual needs of all the aspirants irrespective of caste, creed, race or sex. They have shown them the genuine Pathway to God, have properly guided and inspired them and have thus enabled them to attain the Supreme goal of life viz. Divine Vision and Bliss.

Here we are reminded of a fine Abhanga by Saint Bahinabai, the disciple of Saint Tukaram. In it she has graphically described the " Pandhari Sampradaya " by employing the metaphor of a temple. " The foundation of this temple. " she says, " was laid by Sri Jnaneshwar, on which Sri Namadev constructed a spacious temple; Sri Ekanath raised a tower over it ( We here take the liberty of introducing " tower " for " pillar " to suit the metaphor well ) and Sri Tukaram placed his beautiful golden spire on the tower. "

Likewise we may make use of this fine metaphor in the case of our Sampradaya as well. Sri Nimbargi Maharaj laid a firm broad-based foundation for the temple of our Sampradaya, on which his illustrious disciple Sri Bhausaheb

Maharaj erected a magnificent temple; Sri Amburao Maharaj and Srimati Sivalingava raised a stately tower over it and Sri Gurudev adorned it with his resplendent spire to serve as a beacon-light to all the beknighted mariners on the turbulent ocean of life.

The relative spiritual greatness and grandeur of these saints can very well be realised by pointing out parallels between them and some renowned saints of other parts of Bharat. Sri Gurudev used to say that Sri Nimbargi Maharaj and Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj had their parallels in Jnaneshwar and Tukaram Such was the supreme height of their spiritual attainment. Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj, though a house-holder, can be compared with Sri Ramdas, as there is a striking resemblance between them in respect of date of birth, teaching and organising skill. Sri Amburao Maharaj can bear comparison with Sri Kalyan of Sri Ramdas from the point of view of intensity of sadhana and absolute self-surrender to his Sadguru, whom he regarded as God incarnate. Saint Sivalingava has her counterpart in saint Muktabai of Jnaneshwar and saint Mahadevi Akka of Prabhudev. Sri Gurudev has his parallel in Swami Vivekanand. Just as Sri Vivekanand spread the glory and spiritual mission of his Master throughout the world. Sri Gurudev, though he differed from Sri Vivekanand in many other respects, also in his own way has tried to spread the glory and message not only of his Master but also of his Master's Master as well. Had he been blessed with the robust physic of Swami Vivekanand he would have also like Vivekanand personally carried the spiritual message of his Master to all parts of the world.

## Inspiring Lives

Now let us try to ascertain some important features of the inspiring lives and universal teachings of these saints.

The first feature that strikes us is that these saints belonged to different strata of society and to different

castes, creeds and sex. They were all householders. Financial position of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj, Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj and Sri Gurudev was fairly well, while Sri Amburao Maharaj and Sri Sivalingava had at times to face the penury of the worst type. Excepting Sri Gurudev all others were not educated in the modern sense of the word. Naturally their literature is meagre, though spiritually very valuable and inspiring, as it is an outcome of their rich Spiritual Experiences. Sri Sivalingava, however,was endowed with, high poetic genius. The poems and songs which she has left behind are pulsating with fervent emotion and spiritual illumination. But Sri Gurudev could have all the facilities of modern education which he ably utilised for attaining great intellectual eminence. At the same time he had also the good fortune of experiencing supreme spiritual illumination through the unbounded grace of his Master. Hence, the legacy of his philosophic and spiritual literature is simply unique, instructive as well as illuminating. It throws a flood of light on the cryptic teachings of his great Masters as well as on those of eminent ancient sages and saints of Bharat. He could, hence, clearly expound their message to the modern scientific minds in a thoroughly rational manner.

These saints have received initiation from their respective Masters at different stages of life. There is also a good deal of disparity in the nature of their conversion. Excepting Sri Amburao Maharaj in whom conversion took place suddenly after initiation, the conversion in other saints took place gradually as they carried on their sadhana with varying degrees of intensity and regularity. However, after conversion, the intensity gradually developed in all of them, as they had tha good fortune of having good spiritual experiences through the grace of their Masters. These spiritual experiences in their turn Intensified their faith and meditation still further, which granted them higher and higher blissful spiritual experiences. Thus their spiritual evolution went on developing till they all attained the acme of Self-realisation and gained the authority of initiating other aspirants.

Even suffering had its share in intensifying their sadhana. Jealousy, bereavement and acute illness proved to be blessings in disguise. They all endured them with fortitude and equanimity and did not allow them to disturb their Sadhana. They were all placed in relatively adverse circumstances. But they could still rise above them with the aid of their Master's grace. This shows that a strong will and firm faith, coupled with profound devotion, would enable an aspirant to overcome mountains of difficulties and attain the cherished Ideal.

In this connection the Life-sketch of Sri Gurudev deserves special mention. The five glimpses of his Ideal Life would serve as fine models for the youth to imitate and emulate. They clearly point out how Sri Gurudev became an Ideal Student-Aspirant, an Ideal Professor-Seeker, an Ideal Philosopher-Saint an Ideal Master-Apostle, and finally how he developed a Unique Personality on account of which he could deliver a Universal Message to humanity.

Another special feature worth noting in their lives is that they had brought about a harmonious synthesis between their worldly life and spiritual life. They did not regard total renunciation of worldly life as absolutely necessary for spiritual life. On the other hand, they treat worldly life as complimentary to spiritual life and they led their worldly life in such a way as to facilitate their Spiritual Sadhana.

One more special feature of this Sampradaya is that these saints never indulged in performing miracles. However, God at times performed miracles to spread His devotion through them; but the saints were not even aware about them.

In this way the Inspiring Lives of these great saints will not fail to remind and convince us that like them we can also make our lives sublime provided we earnestly strive for it.

## Their Universal Teaching

The metaphysical, ethical and mystical teaching of

these saints is universal, rational and practical. It is mainly based on their personal experience–both worldly and spiritual. They never indulged in mere theoretical speculation. They mainly recognised two aspects of one Spiritual Entity. The Spiritual Energy that underlies the entire Universe is one. They call it, like Upanishadic Seers, " Atman ", or Nirguna Brahman or God, which is " Sat, Chit, Anand–" Existence, Consciousness and Bliss and which is also the " Creator, Preserver and Destroyer." And the second is the saint who has realised the Atman. They call him Sadguru or Saguna Brahman i. e. Brahman with attributes. They regarded Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesha as the personified powers of the Atman regarding creation, preservation and destruction of the world respectively. They also regarded Rama,Krishna, Narayan and the like as incarnations of the Atman in the sense of realised souls and all other minor deities, that are merely personified forces of Nature, as subordinate to them.

The Supreme ideal that they advocate is God–realisation or Self – realisation or Self-vision. It consists in the intuitive apprehension and silent enjoyment of the Bliss of the Atman. What is the nature of this Self-vision (Atma-darshana) and Self-bliss ( Atmanand) ? About Self-vision, the Maitri Upanishad says : " That Luminous Reality, which comes out of us in the ecstatic state of consciousness and appears to our vision in our own form, is what we might call the Atman- The Immortal Fearless Brahman- ( Maitri up II (2). And Self-bliss, according to the Chhandogya Upanishad, consists in the enjoyment of the supreme happiness by the seeker when he has the vision of the Self ( Atman ) every where.

Now, what is the spiritual discipline enjoined by them ? The main spiritual discipline ( Sadhana ) is meditation on Divine Name granted by a realised Sadguru. This Name is Divinity Itself–God in posse–as it reveals itself to the intuitive vision or audition of a Saint at the height of meditation. Thus, this Name carries with It the Divine Power. Hence meditation on it becomes a process of identification with Divinity. Naturally, it leads to the Blissful vision of the

Atman. But in order to achieve this Supreme Ideal, it is absolutely necessary for a seeker to strictly practise the moral discipline which consists in elimination of vices and cultivation of virtues-especially the central virtue of God-devotion. It is only then that he will be able to attain his cherished ideal of God-realisation.

Such is the core of their teaching, presented in (i) Bodhe-Sudhe of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj, (2) Nama-Yoga of Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj, (3) Practical Philosophy of Sri Amburao Maharaj, and (4) Elixer for Life as well as Jewels of Thought of Sri Gurudev. The spiritual thoughts contained in them are capable of providing necessary light, instruction and inspiration to all genuine aspirants--thus proving as a real Elixer for their life.

## Heart Homages

The second part of this volume contains Heart--Homages to Sri Gurudev. They are all expressions of emotional outpourings by his admirers, students and disciples. Naturally, their emotion has assumed different forms. The admirers have expressed their appreciation for the great intellectual eminence present in his publications and lectures as well as his warmth, sincerity and simplicity, displayed in his behaviour with all those with whom he came in contact--The students are all full of gratitude to him as he was a friend, philosopher and guide to them all. Sri Gurudev had rendered loving help to many a poor deserving student in all possible ways in their higher education. He even treated them as inmates of his own household. Hence they have gratefully expressed their profound love and respectful admiration for his generous affection showered on them The emotion of his disciples has assumed the form of reverential devotion. To them Sri Gurudev was Divinity itself in flesh and blood. Hence their devotional fervour for his spiritual grandeur and guidance has found expression in their devout homages.

We have given below three extracts from the represen-

tative homages, one by an admirer, the second by a student and the third by a disciple along with a short poem which epitomises the feelings and impressions of the disciples.

### (i) Prof. George E. Burch- a visitor ( U. S. A. )

" Much as I appreciate Ranade's spiritual and intellectual achievements, it is his loving personality which I remember best. Surely for many, as for me, he was a friend never to be forgotten. For his disciples he was much more. For India he was one of her great men. In India as also in other countries there are many great scholars engaged in various researches, many great philosophers with deep insight into Reality, many great mystics with ineffable visions, many great teachers who inspire their pupils, many great souls whose integrity and personality are radiant. But we seldom see one person who is all of these at once. Such a one was Sri Ranade, one of those rare Spirits who show us how human nature can be."

### ii) Dr. S. N. L. Shrivastav. M. A. Ph. D.- a Student ( Jabalpur )

" Whoever has come in contact with Dr. R. D. Ranade cannot forget him till the end of his life. His was an Angelic personality, radiating joy and peace and spiritual light. ...Prof. Ranade's bunglow at Allahabad was a rendezvous for the meeting of all aspiring souls of all ranks in life. In these gatherings sparks from the anvil of his luminous mind would often fly and enkindle spiritual fire in the hearts of the assembled. Ranade was a teacher of teachers ... I was simply astonished by the vastness and thoroughness of his learning. Ranade was global in his outlook. ... Philosophy with Ranade was not merely an intellectual pursuit but also, as he used to say, a way of life."

### iii) Dr. N. S. Christian-a disciple ( Aurangabad )

" The spirit of the Universe, encased in a pale ivory

frame and a frail body, mostly skin and bone, Gurudev Ranade resembled a feather-stripped bird, a pair of God-intoxicated eyes glowing compassionately in their hallowed sockets, situated below elevated eye-brows, the symbol of triumph in his long tapasya, an extremely affectionate heart, tirelessly pouring out its life-giving nectar of spiritual wisdom in warbling words of Divine melody-our Gurudev was a Self-sustained Angel of the Lord, in brief, a God in flesh and blood. "

### iv) Epitome of Homages

**Sri Gurudev**

An Ocean of Bliss and Moon-shine of Peace,
A cloud of compassion, showering full grace;
Rich Treasure of Wisdom, a shrine of meditation
Electrifying Energy of The Spiritual Sun;
Inspired by the Lord, possessed by His Might,
Plunged dead-drunk in Divine Delight;
Dispeller of fear, Destroyer of danger,
Saviour of disciples, Guide and Inspirer;
Glory to Gurudev ! All glory to His Grace,
A Spring Perennial of Bliss and Peace.

And finally, We would like to tender our sincere thanks to the Board of Trustees for entrusting the responsible work of editing this Souvenir to us. We have tried our level best with our limited capacity to make the Souvenir as interesting illuminating and inspiring as possible. May Sri Gurudev grant us all the requisite urge and light to proceed along the Pathway to God Chalked out by his great Master.

K. D. Sangoram
M. S. Deshpande

# Part I

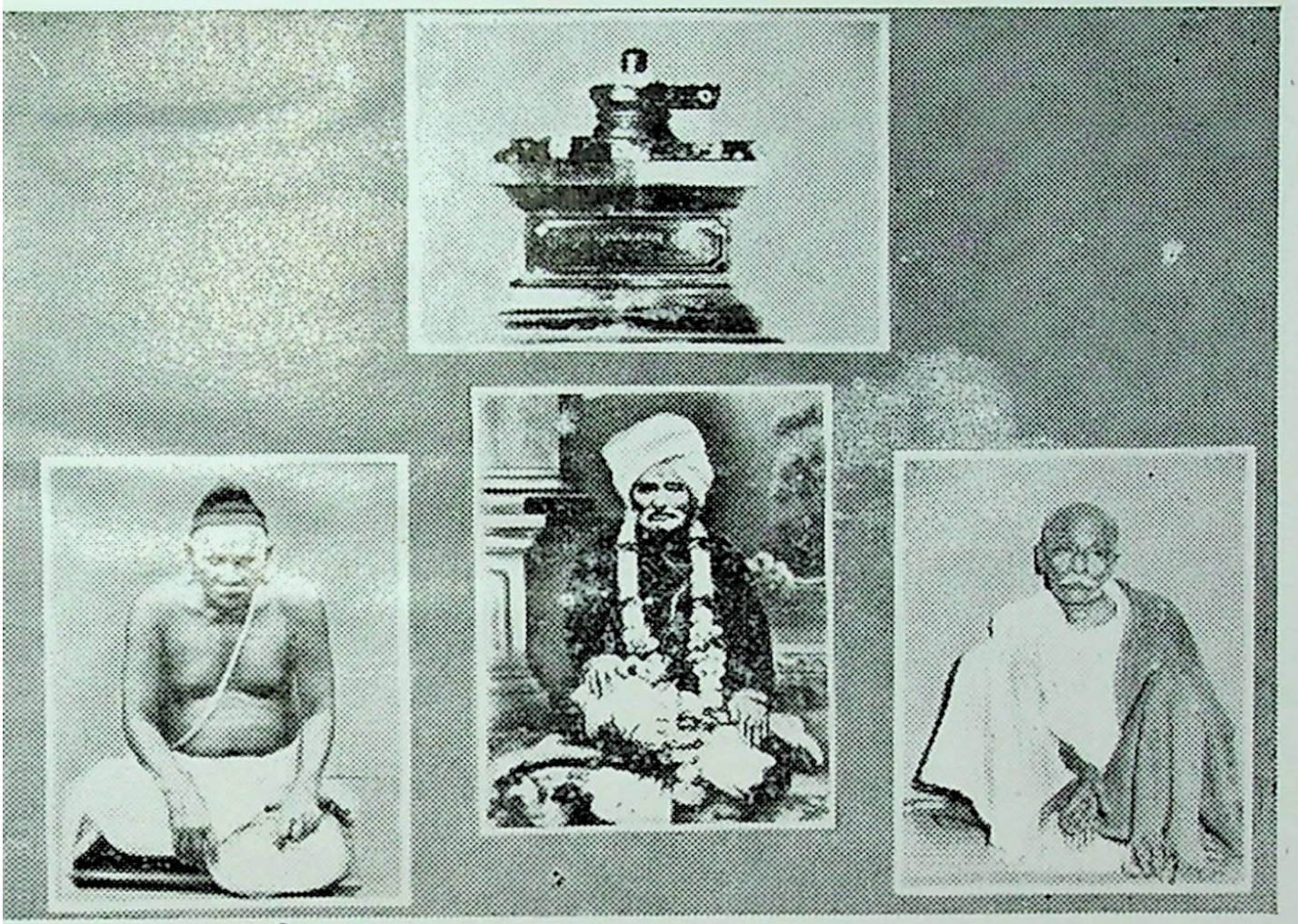
## Pillars of The Sampradaya

1 Sri Nimbargi Maharaj
2 Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj
3 Sri Amburao Maharaj
4 Saint Sivalingavva
5 Sri Gurudev Rambhau Maharaj

This Sampradaya
is
the Foundation of Unity
of
All the Religious Systems
in
Karnatak and India
as well as
**THE WORLD**

Sri Gurudev

Pillars of Nimbargi Sampradaya.

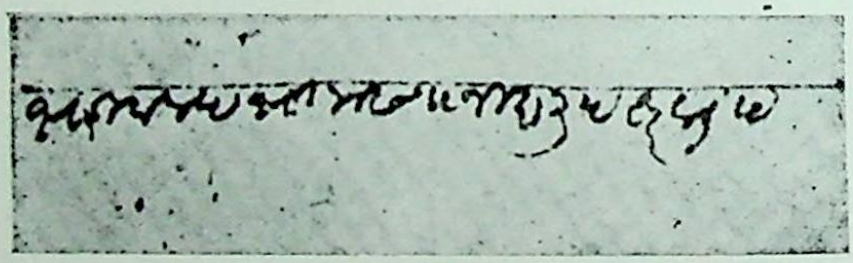


Samadhi of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj ( Top );
Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj(centre); Sri Amburao Maharaj (left) ;
Sri Gurudev Rambhau Maharaj ( right )

# SAMADHI
## of
## Sri Nimbargi Maharaj

One of the Greatest Saints of Modern India.

**His Signature**



# I

# Sri Nimbargi Maharaj

( 1790 - 1885 )

## (I)

## A BRIEF LIFE - SKETCH

*( M. S. Deshpande )*

Sri Narayanrao Bhausaheb-popularly known as Sri Nimbargi Maharaj, can very well be regarded as a Spiritual Bhagīrath. Just as King Bhagīrath had, by his intense, penance brought down the Heavenly Ganga, to the parched earth and enabled it to bloom with fresh verdure, our Spiritual Bhagirath also had. by his intense meditation, brought up the Spiritual Ganga, that had gone underground for centuries in this part and enabled the pining hearts to enjoy her blissful ambrosia. This holy Divine Stream, originated and issued from his heart, gradually gained momentum and expanse from his great disciples and aspired to reach the ocean of humanity through Sri Gurudev. Hence Sri Nimbargi Maharaj has been regarded as the originator of this *Sampradāya*.

Sri Narayanrao belonged to a *Vīraśaiva* family of Nimbargi. a village in the Indi Taluka of Karnatak. When he was a youth of 25, once he was severely scolded by his father, for taking active part in the *Holi* revelry. In a fit of burning remorse and shame, he repaired to Pandharpur and ardently prayed the Lord for three days, to pardon him for his folly and guide him by the right path. On the third day. the Lord

Vithal appeared in his dream and assured him : " Child, don't worry ! Go to Siddhagiri. You will find your Master to guide you." Thts assurance restored his balance and he returned home in a normal mood.A few days afterwards, he went to Siddhagiri, near Kolhapur, on a pilgrimage. It was the place of his family God - Sri Kadasiddheśvara. After finishing the worship of Siddheśvara, he began to search his *Guru*. He had just come out of the Temple, when he saw a *Yogi*, ⁸³ emerging out of a cave nearby and beckoning Narayan to approach him. Greatly attracted by the lustrous figure, Narayan literally rushed towards the *Yogi* and fell at his feet. The *Yogi* gently raised him and took him inside his cave There he blessed him with the Divine *Nāma*, and advised him to meditate on it regularly. " If you do this sincerely " he said "your fame would spread in all quarters."Fully satisfied with this blessing of the *Yogi*, Narayan returned home. But soon he was absorbed in his family life and did not attend to meditation properly, for about six years. Realising this negligence on the part of his chosen disciple, the *Yogi* one day came to the house of Narayan. Greatly surprised by the sudden arrival of his *Guru*, Narayan respectfully welcomed him and worshipped him He paid Rs. 2/. as *Gurudaksanā* to the *Guru*, who graciously returned them back and advised him to use one for the *Prapancha* and the second for hi *Paramārtha*. He solemnly promised his *Guru* that he would attend to meditation without fail, in future. Overwhelmed with emotion he lay prostrate at the feet of his Master. And before he could rise and express his humble gratitude to him, the *Yogi* suddenly left him.

This incident brought about a revolutionary change in the outlook of Narayan. He made a firm resolve to meditate regularly with one-pointed devotion. He gave up his profession of dyeing and adopted the occupation of a shepherd as that was very helpful for his meditation. He daily used to take his flock along with the flocks of other boys,request them

to look after his flock and spend the whole day in soulful meditation under the shade of a tree nearby. Thus did proceed his continuous *Sādhana*, day after day, month after month. and year after year, without the help and guidance of anybody. He received guidance and inspiration from the *Ātman* residing in his heart. for his spiritual progress. He thus went on progressing from stage to. stage for well-nigh 36 years. He visualised the *Ātman*, conversed with the *Ātman*, played with the *Ātman* and ultimately merged in the Infinity of the *Ātman*, and enjoyed the ecstatic Bliss. He thus reached the pinnacle of spiritual elevation.

The external life of Sri Narayanrao Maharaj was quite uneventful. But his inner spiritual life must have been replete with thrilling incidents But as it was a sealed book, none could know its grandeur. Sri Maharaj never revealed it to anybody. A few experiences only that casually slipped from his reluctant lips and picked up by his most beloved disciple Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj, have become known to us. We are told that Sri Maharaj Visualised the full form of the *Ātman* from tip to toe, he had the vision of *Pancavadana* - the Lord with five faces,as well as of *Brahma*, *Viṣṇu*,and *Śiva*, one above the other. He had also experienced the vision of the Infinite -of *Nirbayalu*. He had heard and visualised supersensuous Divine *Nāmas* and hence he was supposed to have brought the *Nāma* from Heaven.

After attaining the highest spiritual goal, he lead the blessed life of a *Jīvanmukta* - a Liberated Saint. He entrusted the management of the household affairs to his son and devoted his entire life exclusively to *Paramārtha*. He carried on his *Sādhana*, blessed the deserving aspirants. and gave discourses on *Dāsbodha*.This went on for 28 years. After leading fsuch a perfectly fruitful, blissful life, Sri Maharaj attained *Samādhi* at the ripe age of 95, in 1885, leaving behind him a few valuable songs and *Vacanās* for the benefit of the aspirants. as wel. as a great *Sampradāya* of Rational Mystics for spiritual welfare of humanity.

Sri Maharaj thus belonged to the galaxy of the greatest of men, who lived and passed away unknown and whose thoughts later on, found expression in the second rate heroes who became known to the world. " He was. " in the words of Sri Gurudev, " like a *Bakula* tree, whose flowers. though in a corner, would send their fragrance, throughout the length and breadth of Karnatāk."

**Note-⊠ Muppina Muni was the name of his Yogi Guru and Gurulinga jangama was the appelation which Sri Maharaj has used as his Mudrika in his songs.**

## 2

# BODHA-SUDHE.

(Words of Eternal Wisdom)

## OM

*Prayer.*

(1)

O Master of Masters mine !
Mysterious Thy might Divine.
May not my mind ever feel
Attracted for the worldly weal.
Full well my devotion swell
And ever in Thee my mind may dwell.
May God display His splendour
Before my eyes of wonder.

(2)

Plant in me Thy righteous seed
Supplanting all the wicked weed.
May my mortal coil
Always in Thy service toil.
May my thoughts ever glow
And words resplendent from me flow.
May my deeds ever shine
In Thy brilliant Light Divine

(3)

May my mind forever
Thy hallowed Name remember.
Nor pine for other things
That never lie within its wings.
May it drink the nectar full
That springs from Thy Name withal
May it plunge like a fish
In the ocean of Thy Bliss

(4)

Thy Grace shall be the food for me
Thy Grace shall be my drink.
Thy Grace my vital breath shall be
From no terror shall I shrink.
May the fountain of Thy love spring up
And pour a nectar-shower
Eternally to bring me up
That I may fully flower.

(5)

Thy measured words like lightening bright
Lend my heart Thy light and might.
May Thy voice like thunder fall
And drive my penury once for all.

# INTRODUCTION

*( V. G. Jamkhandi )*

1] Sri Narayanrao Maharaja of Nimbargi was the spiritual *Paramaguru* of Sri. Gurudev Dr. Ranade, being the spiritual preceptor of Sri. Bhausaheb Maharaj, who initiated Dr. Ranade in the mystical path. Readers of the 'Pathway' may remember that translations from the sayings of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj entitled"Bodha-Sudhe" or "Words of Eternal wisdom "have been given, from time to time. It is in the fitness of things that we pay our tribute of respectful homage to the memory of the great Saint by giving a brief outline of his teachings.

2] It is very difficult to write about great men whose outlook and experiences are far, far different from those of ordinary men and one has to be very careful to see that no injustice is done to their memory. The spiritual tradition inherited by Sri Nimbargi Maharaj and bequeathed by him has been continued, after his passing away, by Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj.Sri. Amburao Maharaj and Dr. Ranade. The writings

of Dr. Ranade himself provide an authentic exposition of the essential ideas of this spiritual heritage. It is the same ancient, spiritual pathway, which has been hallowed by the great saints of India, from the earliest times. It is the path of devotion, consisting of constant meditation on the Divine *Sabija-Nāma—Divya-Nāma* received by the disciple from a spiritual preceptor who has attained God-realization. The spiritual progress of the disciple depends on the observance of rigorous morality. The path is through and through rational, from the initial approach, to the ultimate consummation in Self-realization, God-vision and Ecstatic Bliss. The goal of human life is spiritual salvation - the transcendence to a higher plane of Divine consciousness, where there is eternal Peace and Bliss.

3] It would be desirable here to elucidate the various elements of this Pathway in some detail and refer to some of its broad features. Firstly there is nothing exclusive about it, in the sense that any one, man or woman, of any caste, community or religion or race may be initiated and accepted within the fold, provided he or she is possessed of the requisite inner urge for spiritual *Sādhana* and Salvation. There is no distinction of high and low and a sense of spiritual brotherhood prevails among all. Sri Nimbargi Maharaj had among his disciples persons of all communities.

4] The next feature is the insistence of Sri. Nimbargi Maharaj on purity of character and conduct. In fact, a scrupulous moral life is the very foundation of spiritual life. Sri. Maharaj has stated that one's conduct is one's shield and if one is pursuing the right path, even God cannot do him any harm. His exhortation is that we should abandon all vices and cultivate the virtues, the greatest and fundamental virtue being God-devotion. It may be recalled here that there are various classifications of virtues evolved by different moral philosophers but the basic virtue, in

this tradition, is God - Devotion and the other virtues necessarily flow therefrom. It is also plain that the necessary implication is that whatever comes in the way of God-devotion cannot be a virtue. The morality of a spiritual *Sādhaka* is God-oriented and not the usually accepted egoistic or social morality. Sri. Nimbargi Maharaj has given very helpful suggestions for regulating one's life for realizing the spiritual ideal of man. He teaches us to turn the search-light inward and examine critically our conduct at every step. Saints are, in a very real sense, great spiritual economists, in as much as they have realized that the allotted span of life is the only capital for man and it is, therefore, his main duty, to utilize every moment for his spiritual salvation and attain to God vision, in this very life.

A famous Maxim of a Kannad Saint which is cited by Sri Maharaj and which recalls to our mind the *Sūtra* of Badarayana अनावृतिः शब्दात्- tells us that he who has been blessed with the vision of an ensign of God-which also is God - will never return to *Saṃsāra*. It is sometimes said that mystics are on a supra-moral plane which only means that it becomes their nature to act morally and that they are incapable of acting otherwise. Their actions are God-inspired and are performed for God-propitiation, with a sense of complete surrender and dedication. Their whole life becomes God-inspired, God-directed and God-dedicated.

5] It is not necessary for one to give up the worldly life altogether for the sake of spiritual pursuit. In fact. all the great teachers in this line from Sri Nimbargi Maharaj onwards have been men with a family,carrying on their usual vocations. The two vows that the disciple is asked to take are the giving up of *Paradhana* and *Parastrī*, avarice and lust, and he is requested to meditate on the Divine *Nāma* with the utmost concentration. What is needed is a genuine inner urge for renunciation and not a mere outward show. The essential idea is that one should develop an attitude of complete surrender to God,

necessarily implying thereby, that it is God who knows what is beneficial to everyone of us and being omnipotent, would give us whatever is our due. Our duty is only to meditate on the Divine *Nāma* and develop a deep and inward devotion for God. without expecting anything in return. It would be noticed that though one need not give up the worldly life, worldly life has got to be subordinated to the paramount spiritual pursuit. Our worldly life has got to be regulated and modified, mended and ended,if necessary, for securing the spiritual End. As Saint Ekanath says:

प्रपंच परमार्थ एकरूप होत । आहे ज्यांचा हेत रामनामीं ।।

It is plain that so far as the saint is concerned, there is only *Paramârtha* and no *Prapanca*, though for outsiders it may appear as a combination of both.

6) It is also necessary to dispel the erroneous impression that prevails in some quarters that Mysticism is something mysterious and occult and irrational. It is well to remember that spiritual experiences are quite genuine and mystics are quite normal persons who are endowed with normal faculties and in some cases at least, with extraordinary intelligence and penetration. It is open to anyone to follow the scientific method of "Hypothesis and Verification" and there is n question of any kind of compulsion. It is all a voluntary affair and only persons with genuine spiritual urge would take to the spiritual path and pursue the same if they are satisfied that they are getting dividend. There is no scope here for blind faith or superstition. In fact, mystics are real empiricists and they are in a position of advantage over the rest,since they have experience of both the temporal and the spiritual worlds. It is a most difficult path, entirely different from purely intellectual disciplines and the prospective *Sâdhaka* has to submit himself to a self-imposed code of morality and regulate his life and activities with a view to further his spiritual progress.He must fully realize that the goal before him is not something petty or trivial but it is self-transcendence and self-realization,—

transcendence of the lower self and realization of the higher Self-so that, once he reaches that stage, he is no longer bothered by the ills of the world. Just as the ills of infancy do not bother an adult, who has out-grown his infancy, so also one who has transcended the limited and finite human existence and has become a part and parcel of the Universal, Eternal and Immortal Existence, where there is always Supreme Ecstatic Bliss, is no longer bothered by the ills of the world. "He is in the body but not of it." We find passages in the Gita and the Upaniṣads which declare that once God is realized. all the shackles of *Samsāra* are snapped., all doubts vanish and all *Karmās* drop away.

The Mundak Upaniṣad Says :

भिद्यते हृदयग्रंथिः छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे ।।

7] Another vital feature of this spiritual tradition is that an integrated-as distinguished from lopsided-development is sought after. The individual *Sādhaka* has full freedom to regulate his life and activities with a view to promote and accelerate his spiritual progress in the light of his own individual background and temparament. What is insisted upon is the scrupulous observance of the two vows and intensive meditation on the Divine *Nāma*. This entails a complete change of direction in one's life. The spiritual ideal of Self--realization-the attainment of the goal at the earliest in this life itself—ought to fill up and pervade and permeate the entire consciousness of the *Sâdhaka* and sustained endeavour has to be made for achieving the supreme end of human life. It is not a matter of practising *Sâdhana*, for a few days or months but the spiritual efforts have to be persistently continued to the very last breath. The Gita tells us the same thing and so also reference may be made to the *Yogasûtra* of Patanjali (I. 14). It is a gradual but total transformation of the human consciousness into the Divine Consciousness. At every step and stage the *Sādhaka* should feel that there is

real inward change and that he is carryirg all his activities in a better and more efficient manner and with the consciousness that he is doing them for the propitiation of God.

8] Sri Nimbargi Maharaj has in his teachings emphasized that the only duty of man is to meditate on the Divine *Nāma* and attain the vision of the Divine. Supreme God—Devotion necessarily implies complete surrender (आत्मनिवेदन). This, in its turn. presupposes, the purging away of all vices and an exemplary life of utmost purity and constant and unceasing contemplation on the Divine *Nāma*. This is the supreme goal of all human existence and in the style of the Upanisadic teaching उत्तिष्ठत, जागृत, प्राप्य वरान् निबोधत, Sri. Maharaj has also given the clarion call ಗುರು ಚರಣ ಕಮಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಭೃಂಗನಾಗೊ ನೀ ॥ गुरुचरण कमलदल्लि भृंगनागो नी ॥ "Do become a bee at the lotus feet of the *Sadguru*" and attain Self-realisation. May the Lord shower His Blessings on all.

"Bodha-Sudhe" is the first Kannada book of Sri Gurudev. It is a great-little book-small in size, yet great in its content. He published it in *Devanāgari* script in 1948, "I have lavished," he used to tell us, "more attention and labour on this book than on any other book of mine." This remark clearly indicates the supreme value which he attached to this gem of a book.

We have therefore thought it our duty to present it in the English garb for the benefit of a wider circle of aspirants. My friend Sri V. R. Kotabagi-Advocate-Belgaum translated the first two parts, while I translated the next two parts, I hope that the English rendering that follows would be both interesting and inspiring to the aspirants.

# (2) Bodha - Sudhe

## ★ ( WORDS OF ETERNAL WISDOM )

*Part I*

## Fundamental Principles of Conduct

### *1. Blessed human life*

Human life is indeed a rare blessing. It is surely the result of good conduct in past births, There are four kinds of beings: those born from the egg or the embryo or those that owe their existence to perspiration or germination from the earth. The individual soul ceaselessly wanders through them. It passes through 84,00000 types of lives, perhaps time without number in one or all of them. It acts waywardly, makes merry,works evil. suffers immensely and at long last, passes out in utter despair. Yet, some good somewhere happens to be done to others, and this unattainable human life is the result. But, if even here, the life is wasted, in evil deeds, in hankering after the three possessions of others (viz Woman, Wealth and Lands ), by letting the six passions loose and the Atman is not realised, this precious human life is undone. There can be no guarantee of a return to human existence. We must make the best use of this human life here and now.

★ Note:- A free rendering in English :-Parts I-II, by Sri V.R.Kotbagi
Parts III-IV by Sri V. G. Jamkandi.

## 2. *The Four Stages and States of life*

All life passes through four stages and states. Childhood, Youth, Adult-hood and Oldage are the four stages. Ignorance, Infatuation, Want and Worry are the four respective states.

Childhood first; Ignorance then fails to discern the good from evil and is unable to distinguish what belongs to oneself and what to others. Attaining the teen-age, the person is struck by a fancy for marriage and mating. That is ignorance indeed.

Youth steps in next. The young man takes a spouse by marriage,-that also being the result of good conduct. The man and wife love each other dearly. He gets enamoured of his wife and acts up to her words. Her words assume greater importance than those of his parents. He does not care for the happiness of his parents and makes them miserable. How wicked this ? Such scoundrel seldom gets any happiness.

Attaining the Adult stage, he craves for off-spring. Day and night, he pines for them. Meanwhile, as an effect of some good conduct he begets children. Still, without discerning good from evil, he carries on his sinful life, fearlessly. Then he faces good many miseries.

The fourth stage and the last is Oldage. There the man ceaselessly worries as to the fate of his children after him and as to how they could be happy in their life. Old age is the hardest lot. An accounting of the sins of his life is made up then. Selfishness and greed are then at their height. The sense of mine and thine is prominent. He thus becomes the butt of ridicule. Deeply involved in worldly life, he forgets his own Self (*Ātman*) and therefore suffers most. One has, therefore, to remain extremely vigilant during this stage. One should stick up to the Name of God diligently and try to realise the *Ātman* and free oneself from the Wheel of Existence.

*3. Strength of Conduct is Strength Divine.*

One's good conduct is the only saviour. One should never depend upon others, howsoever slightly. There is no other support except one's own good Conduct. God dwells within us, holding the scales and metes out justice according to desert.

All of us hardly ever care for our own conduct and blame God for the ills befalling us. That is unfair. Experience will teach us that our joys and sorrows are but the result of our own actions. It is the plain truth that every one reaps as he sows. If we act wisely and well, no harm shall ever touch us even in a dream. Conversely, if evil we do, harm shall ever pursue us. Remember this: and act wisely and well.

If one gets some disease, that shall have to be attributed to one's own evil doing. Even a prick by thorn can likewise be had only as an effect of some evil deed. Act well: no disease. no harm, nor trouble shall befall you.

The strength of good conduct is unparalleled. Good or ev i follows one's conduct. Even the Trinity of Gods ( ब्रम्हा, विष्णु महेश) can do no harm-though they so mean - a person possessing good conduct. Then what of this petty human being ! Conversely, the combined power of the Trinity Divine fails to do any good, if one is wanting in good conduct. That is why the Saint Purandardas has said:— ನಾ ಮಾಡಿದ ಕರ್ಮ ಬಲವಂತವಾ ದರೆ । ನೀ ಮಾಡುವದೆನೋ ಹರಿಯೇ " Oh God, if my acts outweigh, what can you possibly do ? " God is indeed with us, if we act well: if we fail in our conduct. He surely chastises. Know this fully and always try to act well.

*4. Like seed. Like crop.*

Good or bad is all our own doing. Like seed, like crop. The seed sown, if bad. the crop too is likewise bad. Bitter cumin

seeds produce bitter cumin weeds; good wheat. produces fine wheat. Sowing bitter cumin seed, how can you expect fine wheat for a crop? That is why one must always act prudently and do good.

The Cholera Epidemic kills many. Cholera is but a hatchet in the hand of God. It is He who kills with that instrument. What can the instrument alone do without the wielder? The All-Controller is God, If, by good conduct, you are the recipient of His Grace, how shall Cholera affect you? Note this; and try to win the grace of God by good conduct.

*5. As the Sound, so the Echo.*

Others behave with us, as we behave with them. Love begets love; anger. snobbery and indifference are paid back in the same coin. Regard, disregard and fraud also react likewise. Open any account (you choose), the credit and debit entries get posted therein accordingly. You would receive what you give. Delight others, you will delight yourself. Pain others, you will be pained yourself. The reason is, that the *Ātman* is all-pervading. That is how your action gets its corresponding re-action. There cannot be any doubt about this.

*6. Let there be Introspection at every Step*

One should always examine one's conduct critically. Even if a thorn pricks, one should examine why it pricked, what fault lay in him and what lapse in conduct was responsible for it. All that should instantly be ransacked, the mind duly reprimanded and the conduct accordingly corrected. Such introspection, at each step, will always relieve one from any contingent harm or disease.

*7. Act up to your Word.*

ನಡಿ ನುಡಿ ಇದೇ ಜನ್ಮ ಕಡಿ

"Conduct consistent with word sets a seal on re-birth". '*Nadi*' means good conduct; '*Nidi*' means to obey the words of your *Guru* or preceptor. Follow the precepts of the sages and saints of the past and this very human existence may veritably be the last.. The individual self will be free from rebirth and shall get merged in the *Ãtman*. the Universal Self.

*8. You yourself are God.*

Men in difficulty thus pray to God; "Oh, God, do us good: None else can do so. You alone are competent to do." The true meaning of this is that "You are your-self the Divinity. As you act, good or ill shall follow accordingly. None else can do anything. You yourself do good." Such should be the prayer to oneself.

*Part-II*

## ELIMINATION OF VICES.

### 9. *Woman Wealth and Property*

All people are caught up in the meshes of these three *(Gunas)* objects viz (1) Woman (2) Wealth and (3) Landed property. God has bestowed upon every one of us these three. We must be satisfied with what has been granted to us and live contentedly till death.

We should not day and night be intent upon others' possessions and covet them by belittling what we possess or by treating our own possessions as naught. If we look so at others' possessions our eyes become corrupt -nay, get accursed ! If we covet, the mind gets debased and accursed.

They (the eyes and the mind) are the enemies. If we dance to their tunes, we are undone. We should never grant them liberty.

In case the mind outsteps our control, we should pray to God; but never desire for the possessions of others, The wealth and property belonging to others should always be treated as forbidden and hellish and we should rest satisfied with what God has given us.

*10. Adultery Paves Way to Dreadful Hell.*

Even at the cost of death one should be away from adultery. Adultery causes destruction of wealth, life, body and reputation. The very life itself is ruined. By this sin one becomes a destitute in worldly life. Liberation slips out of reach and dreadful hell is sure to follow.

Such people are a veritable burden to the earth. They undeservedly consume food. The earth can never bear their burden.

Good people should therefore look upon other women as their own mothers. That will give them happiness in worldly life and on surrender to the worthy spiritual preceptor *(Sadguru)*, they will attain to salvation.

*11. Anger—The Pariah.*

Anger is a *Pariah* and should always be treated as untouchable. Poverty haunts that home where, at all hours, anger creates restlessness. Nobody likes such people. None will call them good and every one will condemn them.

Hence when anger creeps in, it behoves our reason to cast it away and admonish the mind. Anger should be completely uprooted.

It is however excusable to get angry with youngsters with the object of bringing them on to the right path. But then, whatever their mistake may be, the anger should be confined to oral reprimand, rather than resort to physical force where there is always a likelihood of a disaster.

*12 Effects of Self-Conceit.*

Man ordinarily is highly conceited. That is indeed very bad. Conceit pays no dividends. Many are the faults that flow

from it. It is due to conceit that people arrogantly use harsh words to others, nay. even thrash them. They even rush to assault them and utter all sorts of nonsense.

Such men rarely distinguish between the small and the great. Conceited they fail to understand how to speak with others. Such people even forget their own benefactors ! Because of this conceit they treat floor and dust alike.

Man will invariably reap the fruit of the ills arising out of his conceit. He will be paid back in the same coin by others. Nobody will even condescend to speak with him. He will be looked upon as a worn out shoe. People turn a deaf ear to his words.

Remember ! conceit for anything is a sure sign of its coming doom.If man is overproud of his wife,gold or property or for the matter of that,of his children,wealth, knowledge, strength and other assets,they will disappear or be denied to him. A proud king will lose his kingdom, A proud beggar will go without alms ! That is how God breaks our conceit to pieces.

Similarly we should never be proud of our spiritual experiences.They will dwindle because of pride. Those willing to lose them may indulge in pride.

Therefore, when an occasion for such pride offers itself, we should think of those who are far greater than us and yet humble enough and thus correct ourselves. Knowing this and fearing that because of conceit we will lose whatever we have. we should nip conceit in bud.If perchance, it crops up, it should be driven out. We should enjoy whatever God has kindly bestowed upon us and that too without undue publicity.We should rest content with that and live happily.

### *13. Jealousy breeds Distress.*

We should never feel sad or jealous at the sight of the good fortune, high position and progeny of others. "The jealous fellow forfeits his food and pining man, his progeny".

ಕುಡಿಯುವವನಿಗೆ ಕೂಳಿಲ್ಲ ; ಮರಗುವವನಿಗೆ ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಲ್ಲ.

Never for a moment think ill of others. If we do so. misfortune confronts us first, the reason being that the *Ātman* dwelling in all beings is but one and the same. That is why we should always wish others well. Then God will bestow Good Fortune upon us. consistent with the strength of our good conduct.

### *14. Hypocrisy*

Hypocrisy means outward show of meditation on the Self (*Ātman*) while inwardly one is engrossed in the thought of worldly objects. We should never entertain hypocrisy. because God is omniscient and omnipresent. He knows all. Therefore never try to deceive Him by means of hypocrisy.

### *15. Fraud is Bad.*

Never defraud others.Fraud is very bad.The very purpose for which fraud is practised becomes fruitless and is never fulfilled. Never betray the trust reposed in you by others. If, through fraud, we obtain the wealth etc. of others. we lose our own, through fraud. The hand practising fraud gets polluted. The seed sown by such hand will not sprout and no crop will follow.

We feel glad while misappropriating the wealth of others. But when the stock of our previous merit is exhausted. it vanishes in no time and goes off the way it came. It shall not stay.

*16. Snare of Temptations.*

Wife, children. and grand children, involve us in infatuation and that is known as "*Māyā*" (attachment). We should avoid that trap of मोह i. e. temptations. We should not love our children too much. At the same time, we must not fail to arrange for their food and clothing. We should behave with them as though they are the children of others. If we bestow extra care on them out or selfishness, it will harm them. Going the way they do. we should not involve ourselves into the trap of their *Māyā*-attachment and become partners in their joys or sorrows.

It is this infatuation that entraps us. Trapped thus we are rolled about. We have therefore to fight against it and become free from its fetters. On its approach, we should remonstrate our mind and cut off the roots of infatuation. This, indeed, is the real daily sacrifice. Sacrificing of all our vices thus, is tantamount to securing great merit.

*17. Disasters of Injustice.*

It sometime appears that an act of injustice becomes beneficial and an act of justice causes great loss. Even on occasions like this justice should never be let down. We should never misbehave. The loss occasioned by this is visible. If our conduct is straightforward all that loss will be reimbursed by the Inner Witness,God *Ātman*). On the other hand if our conduct be faulty and injustice occurs,we cannot possibly bear the invisible loss e. g. the loss of wife in the prime of life or the loss of children during oldage. We should therefore advise our mind thus; "the visible loss is bearable: but the invisible loss is indeed too difficult to bear. How can others harm us? Despite good conduct, if loss is occasioned. we should consider that some impending danger is past. We can bear the harm done to us by others. But we cannot withstand the punishment inflicted upon us by the *Ātman*."

*18. Proper Punishment for Sin.*

So far as we understand. we should stay away from sin. We should desist from it. Sins unwittingly done bring about some unwitting loss; conscious sin is duly punished.

To illustrate - suppose we steal a cucumber from some field, the husbandman, on seeing it, may scold or perhaps beat us. But for house-breaking or murder, we are scolded, beaten and handcuffed or are even sentenced to imprisonment for life.

*19 The Three Modes of Punishment*

Immoral conduct entails three types of punishments viz. the physical. the spiritual and the divine.

Physical punishment consequent upon our sins denotes beating by others, punishment by state, harm by bird or beast or wrath of elements inflicting pain or suffering to the body. Thus punishment dealt by others is characterised as physical.

Spiritual punishment constitutes the agony to the soul. Disease or pain afflicts the body and mind and makes one grieve.

The Divine punishment is that which is in store for us after death, to be inflicted by *Yama*. the God of Death.

Considering these three types of punishment, we should desist from sin.

*20. Shun Secrecy*

Never act secretly in the affairs of life. We ought to behave unafraid of others. We might however resort to secrecy regarding our own domestic acts. For that, we need not be

afraid of others. The Spiritual *Sādhana* alone should be practised in secrecy. Barring this, nothing else should be secret.

### *21. Idleness—the Arch-Enemy.*

We should never remain idle. Idleness ruins not only the idle person but also his whole family. It is the characteristic of idleness to ruin those who give scope to it. We should, therefore, remain far away from it.

Idleness is equally harmful to spiritual life. When we are occupied in meditation sleep creeps in and idleness is stabilised. We should drive off that sleep when it comes in and persist in meditation. If we do so for a fortnight or so, it departs. The work which idleness prompts us to defer should instantly be completed.

If we carry on in this manner, it becomes a habit with us. To start with we have to be brave. After a time, idleness will vanish.

### *22. Crop of Worry.*

Anxiety or worry is exceedingly bad. its crop grows very rapidly. Hence the moment it appears it should be nipped in the bud. Advise the mind and uproot worry. Worry is oldage and contentment is youthfulness.

Men go on worrying right from birth to death. As they go on worrying it simply grows. But their worrying does not solve the problem. It is the God's will that ultimately prevails and these people only tire themselves by worrying.

We should first be careful enough about our belongings so as not to lose them. But when we lose, we should not worry about the loss. We should not cry over spilt milk. May be some impending danger is avoided thereby. Perhaps a

bigger calamity is averted by this small loss. The world under the sky is compact and the thing lost exists within the limits of the world. God is powerful enough to grant it. If we take care of our conduct. nothing will be lost. What is lost may also be regained. In this fashion. we ought to console our mind.

## 23. *The Aspiration for the Absolute*

Spiritual aspirants should not worry about worldly matters; but they should be ardently intent upon having greater and greater vision of the *Ātman* and also on acquiring the ambrosial juice of God's name. This means that he should always be thinking of the Absolute (*Ātman*). If they meditate always on the *Ātman*, He in turn looks up to their well-being. He will cater to their needs and keep them above want throughout their life.

The sole remedy to destroy the very seed of anxiety and clean up the mind of all dross is the Divine *Name* received from the gracious (*Sadguru*) spiritual teacher.Meditation on God's name uproots all anxiety and God showers His mercy on the spiritual aspirant.

*Part III*

## CULTIVATION OF VIRTUES

### *24. Discrimination (Viveka)*

Discrimination is the only supreme weapon to fight the vices. Nothing should be done without discrimination. One should become vigilant by seeing others stumble and fall. One should act with foresight in doing everything and should vanquish all enemies (vices) with the help of contentment and meditation on the SELF (*Ātman*).

### *25. Prudence.*

Our Buddhi (Reason) may save or kill us. Right reason saves us and the wrong one kills. It is the rightly directed reason which leads to ceaseless meditation on the SELF (*Ātman*). It is otherwise if it makes one turn away from the Self and leads one to worry about one's affairs.Possession of wealth etc. will be of no avail when crisis comes, but it is the rightly-directed reason which would save us. Therefore, one should constantly pray to GOD (*Ātman*) to give rightly directed *Buddhi* (Reason).

## 26. *Restraint of Senses*

There are ten senses. five sensory or cognitive and five motor or active. One should exercise strict control over one's senses, should not yield to their demands, but successfully resist and subjugate them. They would come fully under our control only when they are all wholly employed in the service of the 'Self' (*Ātman*).

It is only he who has thus conquered and sublimated the senses that is a real Hero, a real saint and a God Realiser. He has achieved fulfilment of the mission of human life. The only purpose of human life is to achieve this supreme fulfilment.

## 27. *Destroy Desires First*

Man is swayed by six innate passions,(*Vikāras*),Desire, Anger, Arrogance, Jealosy, Hypocrisy, and Pride. These are responsible for the ceaselessly recurring cycle of Births and Deaths.

They should not be permitted to run a riot. Hence. Desire itself should be eliminated first. One should always suppress desire by advising one's mind, "Why should I want anything? I do not want anything". There would be thus no scope for anger to rise. Desire when frustrated, leads to anger. In the absence of desire, the very foundation of anger would be absent. Where there is neither desire. nor anger, the rest, having no foothold. do not arise at all.

Even if desire springs up in the mind, the body ought to be restrained, and should not be allowed to follow the dictates of the mind. "मन गया तो जाने दो । मत् जाने दो शरीर ।।" "Though the mind goes astray, let not the body follow," Says a Hindi saint.

The mind has got to be regulated and controlled by constant meditation(*Sādhana*). If it refuses to give up passions

it should be advised by Reason; and with the help of regular meditation, constant watch should be kept on the passions ( *Vikāras* ). The best man should be without any ( *Vikāras* ) passions because any desire at the moment of death would entail another Birth.

*28. Do not be a Burden*

One should not be burdensome to any one Any burden so imposed on others, would undoubtedly recoil in the same way e. g. if formaintenance,maintenance would be burdensome to oneself. if for bodily services, one's body itself would become unbearable.

*29. Do not hold down your hand (like a beggar).*

One should never lower one's hand for one's needs. If one takes thus from others,one's wants would ever remain unsatisfied.The begging hand would be cursed and polluted. Therefore,one should always have one's hand raised up(for giving).

Priests and Jangams get their hands cursed by their greed for other's property and by lowering their hands for that purpose. They will therefore never succeed in their undertakings; their poverty will not cease and their wants would remain unsatisfied. Therefore, one should not accept from others anything gratis or in charity. One should be giving to others within one's means.

*30. Tolerance*

One's action should always be above reproach from any one. If one is unjustly reproached or even beaten, one should not retaliate and one's love for them should not be diminished. Those who do wrong, verily consume poison. They will suffer and die of the poison. Since they have acted wrongly, God will surely punish them in some way.

One should bear rebukes from superiors or those in authority and should quietly tolerate rebuke-unjustified-even from inferiors. Generally, others will rebuke if one commits mistakes and one should feel that rebuke is for his good and should be grateful to them. Those, who sincerely advise with rebuke, are his benefactors: those who advise with an apparent smile are his ill-wishers. "The more the tolerance, the greater the success in life". ("ಎಷ್ಟು ತಾಳೀ, ಅಷ್ಟು ಬಾಳೀ".) This is so, because tolerance gives immediate results, viz. peace and happiness. One cannot be happy without inner peace. One endowed with tolerance will prosper in life. Penance is the art of facing the buffets of life with due tolerance. One must quietly bear all suffering. Inner contentment should never be allowed to be ruffled. One should be a veritable ocean of contentment. A real Saint is he who is ever contented. It is beneficial to oneself to bear with patience the burdens of others. A little tolerance would avert many impending disasters. Hence, it is better to do such a profitable business. Making a little sacrifice in price, one obtains infinitely more in spiritual measure from *Ātman*. Tolerance is the price and what is bought is the bliss of the *Ātman*.

*31 Do not give offence*

No offence should be given to another in any way, nor should anybody be annoyed, nor displeased, nor harassed, nor should be made to feel humiliated. The expectations (hopes) of others should not be frustrated.

One should not cause distress to any one in any way. One should not therefore persist in a bargain and seek to enforce it, if it causes loss to another. It should be abandoned with a view to render him happy. If one engages coolies for work they should not be deceived by short payment. If one wants to build a house, no wrong should be done to any one. There should be no encroachment nor unlawful grabbing of timber etc. All things should be willingly bought. If injury and loss are caused to others in its construction, one would suffer the same fate so long as he resides in it. If others are made happy, one would have happiness in return.

## 32. *Truth-un-truth*

One should always speak the truth and should never utter a falsehood, so that one's speech would never be futile. If one goes on speaking the truth, whatever he utters would prove true. If one speaks untruth whatever one utters would prove false.

One should never stoop to falsehood. even if being truthful would lead to trouble. It is self-deception to think that by falsehood one could escape trouble. On the other hand, one would have to face greater trouble thereby. Risk or no risk to oneself, one should never utter falsehood.

Even if adherence to truth were to result in loss of money and property etc., let them go. Our Gracious God is omnipotent and not a pauper. Only what he gives would satisfy and endure. How much could man give ? One's motto should be " death is far better than untruth ". One's creed ought to be 'no falsehood even at the cost of one's own life. God will, indeed, help such a man in his work.

This inexorable rule is subject to only one exception, viz one may utter a falsehood even at one's own risk, for securing benefit to others e.g. to save some one's life.

There is an old story in this connection.

*Kabīr Mahāraj* had seen a Brahmin beating his wife to death. Therefore, he was called as a witness to prove the beating. *Kabīr Mahāraj* realised that the Brahmin would lose his life if he spoke the truth, and if he did not, it would cast a blot on his character as a saint. He went to court meditating on the SELF (*Ātman* , and began to turn his face wherever he saw the Self (*Ātman*). He was asked to stand properly and to depose to what he saw. *Kabīr Mahārja* said " The seer (eye)

cannot speak and the speaker (tongue)cannot see" "देखनेवाला बोलता नहीं । बोलनेवाला देखा नहीं।।" The Judge thought that *Kabir Maharaj* was an insane man and for want of evidence, let off the Brahmin. In this manner the life of the Brahmin was saved. Hence it is permissible, if one, with judicious discrimination, were to utter a falsehood for the good of another. But for one's own selfish ends, one should never utter falsehood.

### *33. Service of Elders*

Parents nurse and bring up their childrn. naturally expecting that they would look after them in their old age. They rear them unmindful of any sacrifice, by themselves even foregoing their own morsel of food. It therefore behoves the children to serve them devotedly, to respect their wishes, not to wound their feelings and thus to keep them pleased.

The affection and blessings of parents, when they are well pleased, would bring happiness to the children. The children who are obedient and render personal service to them will surely obtain progeny and wealth, fame, power and longevity etc.

Those who desire that others should behave affectionately towards them ought to do some service for them. " No affection without service. " "ಕರಣೇ ಪೋತ್ರ ಅಂತ:ಕರಣವಿಲ್ಲ". Tney should diligently do their bidding. They should ever finish the work, in anticipation, even without being asked. They should volunteer and offer to work for them and wherever possible, should do their work-without being called upon to do it-most efficiently,sincerely, in the best manner possible, even better than they (parent's) could have done, and as if it is verily their own job. Doing of menial and so-called mean and trivial service which others may not condescend to do,begets affection very speedily e. g. drawing of water, washing of clothes etc. Such services are essential for begetting love and affection. Such services should be rendered, to the best of

one's ability, with one's heart and mind, by manual labour. or by giving momentary help. Thus, undoubtedly. the parent's affection will grow: and it shall sprout where it did not exist before.

*34. Treat Others as Yourself*

One should treat others as oneself and should feel that the sorrows of others are one's own. One should realise that others would feel the same agony and sorrow if their crops are ruined as he himself would feel if his own crops were to be ruined.

Others' children should be treated as if they are ones' own children There is no harm if they are treated better. Then God would shower his love and affection on one's own children. Human affection. even at its highest, is but petty and powerless, as compared to God's love, which is more potent and real.

One should never be artful or artificial in anything. An artful man would ultimately lose in the matter in which he resorts to artificiality, Hence, no distinction should be made between one's own kith and kin and others. All should be treated equally.

*35. Benevolence.*

One should do good to others within one's means. One should give, for religion and charity, out of what God has given him. If a guest comes at the time of your dinner he should be respected by giving him half of what is available. But none should incur debts or defraud others for doing charity out of a false sense of prestige or generosity. One should not court disaster for doing good to others: but one should, without fail, give what one can without any loss to oneself. Having done so none should be told about it. Thus one should always strive to do good to others. by honest labour, so that one's name might survive him.

## 36. *The Nature of Compassion*

One should be compassionate towards all creatures and should be never callous and unkind to any one. The same *Ātman* resides in all bodies, The *Ātman* that resides in one, resides in all. Therefore, callous and unkind treatment to any one would mean such treatment to the *Ātman*. In that event the *Ātman* will be unkind and harsh to oneself.

All are kind hearted towards themselves and to their own, but unkind to others. Being kind to their own cattle they graze them in others' lands but cause loss to others, being unkind to the others' lands. They kill birds and offer them as food to their pet dogs, and thus become kind to their own dogs but cruel to the birds. At a common meal, they serve more to their own people, being kind and partial to them; but serve less to others, being unkind to them. Such conduct would not leave them and their people unpunished.

On account of famine, at present, many people are starving to death for want of food. But there is no doubt that such a calamity is the result of people having become unkind.

## 37. *Contentment in what God has given*

God has given us *belly* and God will some how give us enough bread for our belly without fail. However, one should live happily with what God has given and should not covet and cast greedy eyes on what belongs to others. If one covets what is not his, and neglects what belongs to him, he would lose both, as the proverb says " तेलही नाही तूपही नाही " " neither Oil nor Ghee " ( illustrating the case of a man, losing both oil and ghee in an effort to get them both in one and the same pot ).

*38. God-Given Vocation*

The vocation that God has given to everyone should be efficiently pursued. The best is agriculture, the next is trade and last comes service. God may give us any one out of these three.

If one covets another's vocation, and scornfully repudiates his own, and is negligent in his work, the *Ātman* within, would be displeased and would mollify his pride. Therefore, the vocation that God has given ought to be pursued sincerely by everyone, so that the *Ātman* would be pleased and propitiated.

*39. The method of work*

All should work very hard with their hands and then take their meals. One should not eat like an idler, only by incurring debts. One must eat with self-respect and not shamelessly.

One must like doing service as if it is ons's own personal work, single mindedly, and without deceit and laziness.If the employer who pays, is pleased by that labour, the work will be successful and profit will come increasingly.

There will be greater joy in doing lowly work than in doing dignified labour. Every work should be done in the allotted time, so that there would be no reproach from any one.

The body must be used to constant work and it must become habituated also to hard work. No indulgence should be given to the body. "ಆಳಾಗಿ ದುಡಿಯಬೇಕು, ಅರಸಾಗಿ ಉಣಬೇಕು." "work hard like a servant and eat like a king"; and thus even though the body may get worn out, still one must go on doing all the duties punctually without wasting any time. Thus

one must be free from any kind of dependence and obligation and live, without worrying as to how one could manage within one's means.

The hand that accepts pay without honest and faithful work gets accursed. The highest of all honest and faithful works is to regulate one's life according to the commands of the *Sadguru*, and employ all the senses and the mind in the service of the *Ātman*.

*40. Balance in life (Sense of Proportion)*

In life, one must be ever vigilant. Thus one ought to constantly check up what one daily earns and spends,-the credit and debit items. One must take each step after due deliberation. Alms and charity should be given with due discrimination. One should not be too miserly. All things should be done with a due sense of balance and proportion.

*41. Spirituality in the midst of worldly life*

One must carry on his worldly life and also cultivate spirituality. One should not confine oneself to the mundane affairs alone. One ought to try and develop spirituality day and night by adhering to *Sattwa Guna*. While leading a worldly life, one should manage to get through un-tarnished by its contamination. Inded, our only mission is to achieve *Paramārtha*. We must regulate and carry out our activities so as to foster *Paramārtha* and only to the extent to which they might be conducive to *Paramārtha*. We should not however worry about anything in the firm conviction that everything will turn out according to the WILL of the *Ātman*. We should therefore dedicate ourselves to constant and ceaseless meditation on the *Ātman*.

*42. Be Steeped In Paramārtha (Spirituality)*

Having lived a worldly life quite diligently in all respects one should pass on the responsibility to one's children on

their becoming fit to shoulder the same. Thereafter one should be completely absorbed in *Paramārtha*. One should never look to worldly affairs again, but should carry on meditation on the *Ātman* till the end, and achieve unison with HIM.

### *43. Misery the result of external battle*

Those who win in the war against a king will rule for a time but will experience happiness and sorrow in equal measure. One can never have only happiness without sorrow. They may have wealth but no issue, or issue but no wealth-either of them without the other. Thus happiness and sorrow being in equal measure those who meet death on the battle-field would go to perdition and those, who win, may rule for a time and then go to the perdition. In either case, perdition will be their lot.

### *44 Bliss the Result of Internal battle*

Tnerefore, such external battle should be avoided and a better and diffrent variety of battle should be fought out. The three *Gunās*,the six *Vikāras* and the ten senses are impediments in the way of realisation of the *Ātman*. Hence, battle should be waged against them day and night, and one after the other, all these enemies should be destroyed.

Thus, vices should be fought out. virtues should be cultivated, and *The Ātman* should be propitiated. One should thus live happily and attain salvation. In external battle perdition is the result in either case. In this internal fight, there is salvation both ways.

### *45. Attainment of Swarājya (Liberation)*

While one progresses victoriously in the internal battle all happiness would be his and there will be no limit to his bliss. In this battle, worldly happiness is guaranteed in the event of victory and bliss of salvation in case of death. When it is

said, that, "one dying in battle attains salvation" the internal battle is the battle referred to. If one is victorious he would achieve *Swarājya* i e. the perennial Bliss in the *Ātman*. While ruling over this kingdom, there is nothing like want, and there will be ever-increasing bliss, without any tinge of sorrow. Therefore it behoves all of us to achieve this *Swarājya* and attain Salvation.

*Part IV*

## PATHWAY TO GOD

### *46. No happiness in worldly life*

Worldly life is like a bubble of water. None knows what happens next moment and there is no certainty about anything. Therefore if one forsakes the *Âtman* and seeks happiness in worldly life, one would be "seeking paddy crop and plantains in a mirage." Water in the mirage is nonexistent. How can crops be raised thereby?

Worldly life is like the proverbial underground granary of linseeds, in which you go down and down endlessly, and so, instead of happiness you would have only increasing misery in worldy life.

### *47, Advice to Mind*

Therefore advise the mind thus, " Oh mind, you have been born in eighty four lakhs of species of births(*Yonis*)in the past and having acted according to your whims you have

experienced suffering in all your former lives, without realising the *Ātman*. You cared only for your animal wants like food. water etc. and whiled away your time like an idler begetting children. You earned wealth even by foul means and were subjected to several births and deaths in succession. But now in this invaluable human life, you should give up lethargy and sleep. fight against the three *Gunās* - objects viz. woman, wealth and land. and surrender yourself to the *Sadguru*. Be ever watchful about your conduct and character day and night. propitiate the *Ātman*. liberate yourself from the circle of births and deaths. and attain the Bliss by realizing the *Ātman*.

*48. Blessings of the Sadguru*

The *Sadguru* is one who has realized his identity with the hidden form of the *Ātman* (गुप्तरूप). It is most difficult. after your transmigration through all species of life in your past births. to come across such a *Sadguru* and receive the Divine Name (Initiation) from him. Generally people do not know anything about this Pathway to God. They live as they like, and after death move ceaselessly through various births.

Therefore, you should not behave like such ignorant people, but should act according to the instructions of *Sadguru*. You will have fulfilled the mission of human life if you meditate on the *Ātman* and experience the vision of His Light.

*49. Work with hands; meditate with mind.*

Let the mind meditate, while hands work. Having received the grace of the *Sadguru* you should go on working with your hands, while mentally uttering the Divine Name. " Work with your hands, while meditating on Hari. Be free from entanglements just as the spider is free from the web it weaves. Watch your breath upwards and downwards. Do not

waste a single breath without remembrance of the Divine Name." करत काम करो, हरीसो ध्यान धरो। मकडीके जालमे तंता। चढते उतरते दमकी खबर रखो ।। says Kabir Maharaj.

In worldly life you must act like a wage earner (cooly). He does his work with an eye on the wages he earns. Hence, you must do your work well in order that you may earn enough to maintain your family.

But you must carry on meditation on *Ātman* constantly. Only the body must attend to work: the mind and the soul must be intent on the *Ātman*.

*50 Detachment in worldly life and Delight in spiritual life.*

In worldly life, you must develop a sense of detachment in respect of worldly possessions viz. wealth and cattle and house property etc. Realize that the *Samsāra* (family) is not yours, and treat it as belonging to others: but at the same time you should see that no want is felt for your family.

In *Nivratti* i. e. *Paramārtha*, you must take delight. You must always practise *Paramārtha* constantly with zeal and enthusiasm. You must realize that *Paramārtha* is your first and foremost duty, and while doing your mundane duties with your hands you must be uttering the Divine Name continuously.

*51. Give up forgetfulness and live in the awareness of God*

Awareness of God is the remembrance of the *Ātman*.Forgetfulness is the non-remembrance of the *Ātman*. By remembrance of God, all your work gets purified,and is satisfactorily carried out. Even the impossible would become possible. By forgetfulness of God, even good undertaking would be spoiled, and whatever is desired or done, or heard or spoken, all that comes to naught.

Therefore, if you always meditate on the *Ātman* and see Him, without even for a moment giving up remembrance of the *Ātman*, all will be accomplished and you would secure the Bliss and peace of mind (स्वस्थता). Swa (स्व) means (स्वरूप), one's own Form, and Stha (स्थ) means (स्थिरता), firmness and stability. If one is firmly established in one's own Form, there will be Bliss all round.

Hence, Eschew ignorance, attain illumination and lead a life in the Spirit. Then will you be free from all troubles here and attain salvation hereafter. You must therefore continuously remain in uninterrupted meditation without wasting a single moment. The *Ātman Himself* is the ultimate Reality. All else without the *Ātman*, without the remembrance or vision of the *Ātman*-is utterly in vain and fruitless.

## 52. (सत्संग) *Satsanga- The Company of the Good.*

"*Satsanga*" means the company of good people who are virtuous, and superior to oneself. Remembrance of the Divine Name given by the *Sadguru*, is indeed *Satsanga*. It is *Satsanga* to constantly weave the Divine Name in one's breaths. So also, the constant contemplation of Reality and the uninterrupted mystical Realization of Reality, is verily *Satsanga*. One must always have the association with the *Nirguna*, (The Impersonal *Ātman*,) so that one would become "*Achyuta*" i e. Immutable Divinity and would be liberated. By association with '*Achyuta*', the *Ātman*, one would imbibe and acquire the splendour of "*Achyuta*", the Immutable *Ātman*.

## 53. *Meditation on the Ātman both day and night*

One should utter the Divine Name given by the *Sadguru* while sitting or standing, and must also be seeing with the eyes the light of the *Ātman*. The mind must be drawn back from the

meshes of passions and be engaged in the remembrance of God's Name. The Divine Name will protect one from all perils and evils. Hence no time should be wasted in anything else, giving up meditation on the *Âtman*. Meditation on the *Âtman* is the foremost duty of man in this human life. Meditation on the *Âtman* should never cease. It should be carried on both day and night. One must devote to meditation at least one hour each, on three occasions daily, or two hours during day and two hours during night.

This *Sādhana* should always be practised in secrecy, zealously and continuously. One should live in constant meditation day and night without letting others know about it. The secret should not be divulged.

*54. Sādhana should be practised by overcoming the innate lethargy of the body.*

A cooly gets up in the morning to work on the grinding stone, against his will, as he cannot help it. Similarly one must carry on the *Sādhana* as an unavoidable duty, by getting up early. The body is reluctant to get up because its nature is to move from birth to birth. But it should not be heeded. One should defy its promptings even at the cost of inflicting pain to it, and sit down for meditation.

The primary purpose of this life is to practise spiritual *Sādhana*. Therefore it should be practised by overcoming the innate ease-loving tendency of the body.

*55. Elimination of thought and imagination.*

During *Sādhana* (spiritual meditation) no thought or craving of any kind should be allowed to enter the mind. It should be driven out, if at all it tries to enter into the mind.

Our desire will not be fulfilled, if we act wrongfully according to our whims and caprices and build castles in the air, without caring for the dictates of the *Ātman*, when in fact, it is the *Ātman* who gives and takes and protects.

Hence, no desires should be entertained at all, in the implicit conviction that whatever God wills will happen. The seeds of thought and desire must be destroyed, and meditation should be carried on without entertaining any desires.

All thoughts and desires will vanish if one but contemplates on the Nirvikalpa (निर्विकल्प), the *Ātman* who is beyond the reach of thought and imagination.

*56. Ātman tests man*

Elders give some trinket to children and, with a view to test them, ask them to return it. If they give it, the elders are delighted at their nobility, They really do not want the trinket back, nor do they take it back. Similarly the *Ātman* creates situations in order to test man. The *Ātman* wishes man to give up (गुण) craving for worldly possessions. If men are sincerely willing to renounce, the *Ātman* would not stretch the test too far. If man sincerely undertakes the *Ātman's* work, giving up his craving for worldly possessions, the *Ātman* being pleased, would shower His grace on him.

*57. Tit for Tat. Reap what you Sow*

You reap what you sow. The *Ātman* never withholds but returns whatever is due to man. Man receives back all that he deserves by his conduct, and he has got to reap what he sows, whether good or evil.

In the *Ātman*, everything is perfectly balanced and calculated, neither more nor less. What is sincerely done is

returned by sincerity in exact measure. Similarly, formality is reciprocated by formality, tedium by tedium and harshness by harshness..

### 58. *Man's foremost Duty is Service of the Ātman*

Man should be ever ready to serve the *Ātman* residing within him. He should not brush aside the dictates of the *Ātman* by submitting to the vagaries of his mind and dancing to its tunes.

Man is but the servant of the *Ātman*, who is his Master. A cooly is paid two annas if he works for his employer till evening according to his instructions. But if man conducts himself according to the dictates of *Paramātman*.-The Primeaval God,-with countless merciful hands, He would see that no want is even felt by such man in his worldly life.

Thus by being ever vigilant about the *Ātman* and by absorbing himself in His meditation. the *Ātman* should be progressively realized. Man's conduct should be of the highest morality. He should serve and propitiate the *Ātman* and pray for his maintenance and protection ( bread and shelter ). Dedicated service of the *Ātman* is the foremost duty of man. This is *Swadharma*-man's sacred duty, *Punya* - the highest merit to be attained by him.

Nothing should be done. by thought, word, or deed, without referring to the *Ātman*. All things should be done by always remembering Him and seeing Him as well. Everything should be done for the sake of the *Ātman* and nothing for the sake of worldly welfare. This is the foremost ideal for the conduct of man.

### 59. *Ātman should be our guide in all our undertakings*

The light that is seen during meditation is the *Ātman*.

We should always regard the *Ātman* as our sole guide in all our undertakings.

Nothing should be undertaken for which there is disapproval of the *Ātman*. If any work is undertaken in spite of His disapproval, it will never succeed. The *Ātman* is always in front of us. If in any matter, he moves aside even a little, it should be regarded as an indication of His disapproval and the undertaking should be dropped.

If, therefore, every work is undertaken with the *Ātman* in front of us, success is assured.

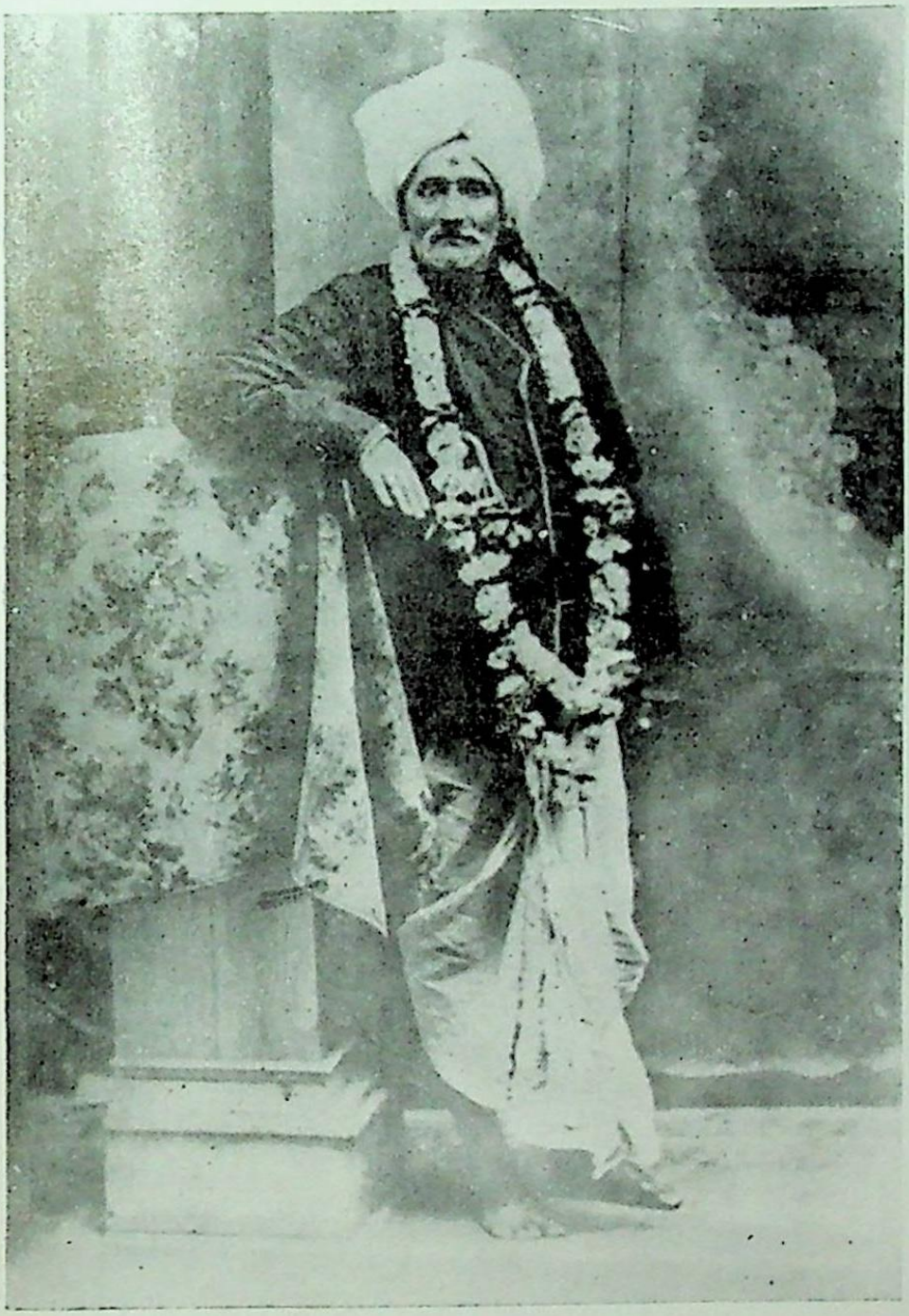
*60. Realisation of the Ātman.*

We must dedicate our worldly life (*Samsāra*) to the *Ātman* and should ever be engaged in His meditation. Everything is controlled by the *Ātman*. But for His will, nothing will take place. We should, therefore ,try to deserve His grace by constant soulful meditation and visualise His Light,For this alone, has the Lord granted us our eyes.

It does not matter, even if we will not have a full-fledged vision of the *Ātman*. However, as has been stated by a Muslim saint.देखे तो खस खस । मुरीद मरे तो वस वस ।। "Even a glimpse of the Spiritual Atom (Spiriton) by a disciple, is enough for his salvation after death." Similarly, saint Tukaram also asserts: द्यारे अच्छेर पावशेर धडा । जितके लागेल तितके जोडा ।। " Take whatever has been granted to you (by the *Ātman*). It may be a quarter seer, or a half seer or more' (Any amount of It is sufficient for your salvation) ". The same conception has been expressed also by a Kannad saint in the following words- ಕುರುಹು ಕಂಡರೆ ಮರಳಿ ಭವಕ್ಕೆ ಬರಲಾರಿ.
"If you get even a glimpse of the Spiritual Ensign, you would never be required to take a birth again."

Hence, we should have the vision of the *Âtman* in this very life, by extracting Him from the body. We shall then be free from any further rebirth We will also enjoy in this life material prosperity and good progeny; and moreover, since we have had the vision of the Light of the *Âtman*, we shall attain salvation after death, by merging in the *Âtman*.

## Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj



Birth—**Umadi**
Saka 1765 : Rama-Navami

Samadhi—**Inchageri**
Śaka 1835 : Magha Shudha 3
( 29-1-1914 )

# Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj
1843-1914

## A Brief Life-Sketch

*M. S. Deshpande M.A.*

"Sri Nimbargi Mahāraj and Sri Bhausāheb Mahāraj are the Jñāneśvar and Tukārām of of our *Sampradāya*.They are not a whit less in their spiritual attainments, than Jñāneśvar and Tukaram."

These were the words of admiration with which Śri Gurudev had once described the spiritual eminence of these Masters before one of his spiritual brothers. Sri Bhausaheb was born, like Sri Rāmdas, on *Rāmanavami* Day, in a well-to-do Deshpande family of Umadi - a village in the Jat Taluka of Maharastra.Even as a boy he had developed a deep devotion to Śri Hanumant and was daily worshipping him. He was blessed by Sri Nimbargi Maharaj at an early age of 14. Since then he began to meditate regularly on the *Divine Nāma* granted to him by his Master. His meditation gradually gained in duration and intensity and enabled him to enjoy the effulgent Vision and Bliss of the *Ātman*.His Master was greatly delighted

by this spiritual attainment of his beloved disciple.And at the time of his departure he showered his blessings upon his disciple and granted the disciple all his spiritual merit, just as Sri Rāmakrisna Paramahamsa had done to Vivekanand. He authorised Sri Bhauraya to bless the aspirants and disseminate the gospel of devotion among the people. Profoundly pained by the departure of his Master Sri Bhauraya carried on his meditation with redoubled zest and finally attained the acme of spiritual height, viz. realisation of his identity with the Absolute.

He then established his *Math*, at Incagiri-a village near Umadi-the native place of his premier disciple Sri Amburao Baba and began to carry on his spiritual activities from that centre. He blessed several disciples in that part and made Incagiri a place of Pilgrimage soon. Wnen this mission of Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj progressed a good deal, his Master once appeared in his vision and expressed his full gratification at the splendid spiritual service of his disciple. As a result of his superb spiritual height, Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj exhibited all the characteristics of an Ideal Saint described by Sri Ramadas in his *Dāsbodha*. Thus he had become, in the words of Sri Gurudev, " an ornament to spiritual life. "

The supreme spiritual glory of Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj has been further extolled by Sri Gurudev in his letters to his Master, in these inspiring words :

" You are the President of the Assembly of the earthly gods, viz, the great *Sādhakas* who have enjoyed the Bliss of the *Âtman*, in Incagiri. Mutual exchange of Bliss increases it a good deal. Such a Bliss cannot be had anywhere else in the world. In a holy place like *Incagiri* 'where the blissful Lord has taken His abode' you have been performing meditation with steadfast regularity, for years together, and have been engaged in the work of showing the Pathway to God to people for so many years. What profession can be superior to this ? Those persons alone glorify this earth, by their birth, who free people

from difficulties, who confer Supreme Bliss on all, and who serve their Master with one-pointed devotion.There is no doubt about it. Very often the thought, that I had the good fortune of having the association of an exhalted person like your great Self, gives me a thrill of delight. The greatness of Saints cannot be adequately described. Let the capacity to understand your greatness develop in me. I pray to you to bestow it upon me. Nothing else in this world is deemed supreme by me, excepting the possession of the ever advancing capacity to know your power and greatness. It is for you to grant it to me " (7-8-1913)

" What thing is there which cannot be attained by Self-realisation ? Without actually going in for it, it can make a blind man see, a deaf man hear, an ignorant person utter words of wisdom, a buffalo repeat the *Vedās* etc. It can accomplish these things and many more, without actually doing them. Otherwise, what is the use of mere learning? If learning is not supported by Self-realisation, the person would fall a prey to egoism. But if it is based on Self--realisation, if it has the backing of Self-realisation, it would fill all the quarters with the resounding glory of God-devotion. Nothing but Self-realisation can ever endow this power to learning. Hence it would be more appropriate to call your Holiness " *Ātma-Jnana* " or Self-realisation, rather than Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj. Since you have realised your identity with the Lord-*Ātman*, all your attributes such as body, name and form. have fully merged in Him. As you have completely identified yourself with the Lord, what harm is there if you are called "*Atma-deva*"- "Lord-Self "? Recently I have come across several saints, but I did not find even one who knows as you know, what Self-realisation really means.Hence very few know the real greatness of Self-realisation and consequently the real greatness of Your Holy Self. " (8-3-1912)

# (2) NAMA - YOGA ★

## ( Yoga of Divine Name )

**Extracts from Letters by Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj**
**Selected, Classified and Translated,**

*M. S. Deshpande, M.A.*

## 1. Introductory

### Significance :

" *Nāma-Yoga* " is a word specially coined by us to designate the Spiritual Philosophy and Discipline of Sri Maharaj. He himself called it *Jñāna-Marga*-or Path of Self-realisation. We have, however, used "*Nāma-Yoga*" in a double sense. In fact, both the words-*Nāma* and *Yoga* carry double meaning. *Nāma* means i) Meditation on Divine Name and ii) Divinity in posse. Like many other saints, to Sri Maharaj also, *Nāma* (name) and *Rupa* (Form) of God were identical. The Name itself was God. *Yoga* means i) Spiritual discipline and ii) Spiritual union or realisation of God. In the first sense, *Nāma-Yoga* represents the Path. while in the second sense, it repre-

★ Based on the writer's biography of Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj-the Saint of Umadi, entitled " Jivana-Ganga " (K) or "Jivana-Ganga" (M) Part II.

sents the Goal, as meditation on Divine Name, if properly practised, will lead to the realisation of the vision and bliss of the Lord.

Now the Lord has thousands of Names. Which of them should be meditated upon? Are all Names equally effective? Sri Maharaj maintained that the Name that reveals itself to the intuition of a realised saint and is imparted by him to his disciple. is alone capable of leading him to God. It alone will enable him to have the vision and bliss of God. Such a Divine Name is called *Amara Nāma*-Immortal Name or *Sabīja Nāma*-Seed-Name by the saints, because, this immortal Seed alone,when watered by devotional meditation,sprouts and bears flowers and fruits of spiritual experiences and grants bliss to the seekers.Such a meditation is the Means and the bliss,is the End of this *Nāma-Yoga* of Sri Maharaj.The extracts that follow will throw a flood of light both on the Means as well as the End—Path as well as the Goal.

## The Plan :

We have first selected a few extracts from the Letters of Sri Maharaj.and formed them into 44 groups.We have. then classified the groups into two Parts : the first dealing with the Path and the second with the Goal. Part I is further divided into two Sections entitled i)*Abhyāsa*- (Practice) and ii) *Vairāgya*- (Dispassion) respectively. Repeated performance is *Abhyāsa*-Practice ( *Paunaḥ punyena karaṇam abhyāsaḥ* ). Constant meditation on the Divine *Nāma* is the Practice or Spiritual Discipline, advocated by Sri Maharaj. It resembles the *Abhyāsa Yoga* of the *Gītā*. " To denounce and renounce worthless things" is his *Vairāgya*. To attain the essential we must eschew the non-essential. Still like Sri Ramadas, the renunciation advocated by Sri Maharaj was internal and not external.Like Sage Vasiṣṭha.Sri Maharaj preferred '*Antastyāga*,' mental renunciation. He advised his disciples to perform worldly duties with perfect diligence. But he warned them that they should consider spiritual discipline to be the

be-all and end-all of life and that it should claim their highest loyalty. Hence, while they are engaged in the daily work they should not fail to meditate on the Divine Name.

The second Part also contains two Sections : The title of the first section is *Abhyudaya*--worldly weal and that of the second is *Niśreyas*--spiritual Bliss. *Abhyudaya* connotes worldly grandeur while *Niśreyas* signifies spiritual welfare and beatitude. Both worldly as well as spiritual life require the support of Divine Power and Grace. Worldly life is necessary for the well-being of the body, and spiritual life, for the evolution of the soul. And as human being is a complex of the body and soul, he should be adept and careful in the performance of both his worldly as well as spiritual duties. The Path of *Abhyāsa* and *Vairāgya* mentioned above, would enable an aspirant to attain both the aspects of the Goal simultaneously. Such is the outline of Sri Maharaja's *Nāma-Yoga*, the details of which can be ascertained from the following extracts.

## Basic Philosophy :

Sri Maharaj formulated the Spiritual Philosophy of Life, not through mere intellectual speculation but through actual experience. He lived spiritual life and had gained direct experience of all its aspects. He was not a scholar. His meagre reading was confined to some important writings and songs of Kannada and Marathi saints. He did not write any book about his spiritual life and teachings. Sri Maharaj picked up some important ideas and expressions from the saints that accorded with his personal experiences, and used them in his discourses and letters to his disciples, to elucidate them. Ultimately it was his direct experience that was his primary authority.

The Philosophy underlying Sri Maharaja's *Nāma-Yoga* is to be found in a seed form in the following Five Aphorisms, selected by him from the writings of some Marathi saints.

As they are cryptic, pithy and meaningful, we have tried to elucidate them to a certain extent, so that their real significance might be clearly brought home to the aspirants.The first two Aphorisms are--

i) *Āthava to brahma*-Remembrance(of Divine Name)is Spiritual Reality.

ii)*Nāthava to bhavabhrama* : Non-remembrance (of the Name)is worldly illusion.

The words'*Āthava*'and *Nāthava*' also mean knowledge and ignorance of *Brahman*. Wnen they mean knowledge and ignorance they indicate the nature of *Brahman* and *Maya* (illusion). And when they mean remembrance and forgetfulness, they suggest the means of attunement with them.When we remember *Brahman*, we actually reside in *Brahman*, merge in *Brahman*. But how to remember *Brahman*?We could imagine the form of *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu*, *Maheśa* and others.But Sri Maharaj never approved this play of imagination. According to him, meditation on the Divine Name is alone the real remembrance of *Brahman*.This Divine Name imparted by a *Sadguru* enshrines the Spiritual Energy in a seed form. With the help of meditation on such a *Nāma* - by merging the mind in it, a seeker can realise the supersensuous Divine Light,Sound etc, as well as the Bliss and Peace of the Lord.Such is the teaching of Sri Maharaj in this respect.

Now, how to intensify our meditation in order to enable it to attain this spiritual realisation? The next three Aphorisms of Sri Maharaj point out the method required for it :

iii) *Jñānāsa mūḷa agni* : Fire is the source of Illumination — Knowledge.

iv) *Bhaktisa mūḷa virakti* :— Dispassion is the source of Devotion.

v) *Antaḥkaraṇāsa mūḷa mana* :— Mind is the source of Ego or Heart.

'Here' fire' means burning desire, passion or longing and 'Knowledge' means illumination It is the earnest desire for the Lord that will eventually attract His illumination. This desire is an outcome of deep love or devotion for God. But we cannot love God and mammon at the same time. We cannot feel and develop devotion for the Lord unless we feel dispassion for material objects. This is pointed out by the second Aphorism. Devotion and dispassion are interdependent. They help each other in their development. When our devotion is enhanced with the aid of dispassion, our meditation gains in intensity. And if such meditation is continued for a long time, the Divine Name sinks and soaks in our Ego- in our inner being and is assimilated with it. Meditation would then become our very nature. this is the suggestion of the third Aphorism.

## Bird's Eye View of Nama-Yoga.

Let us now try to have a bird's eye-view of this *Nāma Yoga*, of all its four aspects viz. Practice, Dispassion, Worldly Weal and Spiritual Bliss. as pointed out by Sri Maharaj.

i) **Practice**: As stated already. meditation on *Nāma* is the nucleus of this practice. All other factors revolve round it or are contributory to its development. The philosophic basis of this *Nāma-Yoga* has been intimated already (1☼). God is all-powerful. It is His grace that makes both the worldly as well as spiritual life full of bliss. Soulful meditation on his Name is the only means of attaining His grace. Hence during his worldly life, a seeker should develop devotion for the Lord through dispassion and attain the vision of God with aid of one-pointed meditation on His Name. Such is the spiritual Philosophy of Sri Maharaj in a nut-shell(2).

Regarding the method of meditation, Sri Maharaj used

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☼These Nos within brackets indicate the Nos of respective groups of extracts,

to mention the following four factors : *Niyama* - Regularity, *Nischaya* - Resolve. and Firmness, *Kaṭṭa* - Restriction and *Niṣṭhâ* - Zealous Faith. The first factor refers to the time and period of meditation: the second,to the tenacity of the seeker, the third, to the proper process of meditation and the fourth, to the feeling of the seeker at that time. Meditation should be performed, according to Sri Maharaj, at least for one hour in the morning and one hour in the evening. Our resolve should be steadfast - unwavering. The proper process to be adopted, should consist of a steady posture, fixed gaze either on the tip or on the top of the nose, mental repetition of Name along with the breath. Lastly, meditation should be carried on with earnest love and joy.Such a meditation,according to him, would remove the difficulties and mental vagaries, would increase our devotion and through the grace of the Lord, would enable us to attain His realisation and bliss. ( 3-4 ).

Such a devotion is of two kinds : *Sakāma*- with desire and *Niṣkāma*-without desire.The first type of devotion would grant non-eternal liberation such as *Salokatā*-Residence in Heaven and *Samīpatā*-Residence in the vicinity of God, while that of the second type would grant Self-realisation and eternal liberation viz *Sāyujyatā*-Unison with God (5). Hence a seeker should prefer desireless devotion. Meditation should be performed merely for the sake of glorifying the Lord. There should be no other ulterior motive(6). Unless we give up our desire for sense-objects, we won't be able to attain God (7).

But how to control the wanderings of the mind, remove its innate urge for sense-objects? There is only one remedy for it. We should not allow our body to pursue the mind. Then it would, after some time, turn back of its own accord. Thereafter we should forcibly engage it in meditation. Then the discrimination resulting therefrom, would dispel the darkness of illusion born of ignorance and enkindle the light of faith (8-9).

Man is very often assailed by adverse events in life. He should utilise them as well, to develop his devotion. So long as he is free from their onslaughts, he should joyfully perform intense meditation so that he should not be greatly affected and disturbed when actually assailed by them. And when he is actually in the midst of trouble, he should regard the calamity to be the outcome of God's Will and should remain serene and undisturbed and carry on his meditation joyfully (10).

Meditation should be full of devotion and concentration. It should be prolonged and intense. The Name should then, sink deep in the heart and produce thrills of devotional joy in it. Such an ardent devotion would enlighten the devotee about his intimate relation with God ( 11-12 ). This would enable the seeker to have the experience of '*Bindu-Tirtha*' i.e the vision of '*Bindu*' or Spiritual Atom and the taste of '*Tirtha*' or Spiritual Nectar. His spiritual experiences would gradually develop and culminate in converting his body-consciousness into God-consciousness. (13).

If meditation on Name is the internal aspect of this *Yoga*. *Pothi*-Reading of and discourses on sacred Books, *Bhajan* and *Arati* - Singing of devotional songs and waving of lights before God-are its external features. If they are practised with proper faith and devotion, they would enhance the intensity of concentration in meditation. They would also help to spread devotion among the people (14-15). The occasional discourses, about the lives and teachings of saints, would also develop love and enthusiasm for spiritual life and grant spiritual experiences which in their turn would fill the devotee with intense fervour. (16)

A seeker should also live in the company of Saints and learn to realise and appreciate their spiritual greatness. He should constantly think about their words of wisdom and intensify his longing for the Lord. When his heart begins to pine for the vision of God, he would not fail to have His vision (17-18).

We should perform our occasional duties calmly and diligently.We should, however, consider that God is the real doer and we should willingly allow His will to prevail.We should surrender everything to Him. That God does everything for our good, should ever be our feeling-our attitude. Therein lies the real spirit of self-surrender (19-20).

ii) **Dispassion** : Devotion or passion for the Lord, necessarily requires dispassion for sense-objects. We cannot have both sense-pleasure and Divine Bliss at the same time. For attaining Bliss we must be prepared to give up sense-pleasure (21-22). By developing dispassion, we should be free from the attraction of sense-objects and learn to lead a moral life. That alone will enable us to make some progress in spiritual life (23).

Moral discipline has two aspects-one negative and the other positive. The first asks us to eliminate our vices, while the other wants us to cultivate virtues. Ego born of our indentification with the body. is the father of all the vices such as lust, anger, etc,. It hampers both the material and spiritual welfare. Hence it should be first eliminated. (24). Those that become aware of their vices and earnestly repent for their past misdeeds, are purified through their sincere repentance. And they would, then, gradually acquire good feelings, thoughts and actions. (25)

In our worldly life, forgiveness plays an important part. It is our sacred duty to forgive the faults of others and make them happy. This will eliminate our selfishness and develop our charity, which is very helpful in spiritual life for its progress. Even a little practice of this virtue would lend happiness to all (26-27).

A seeker should live in this world like lotus-leaf in the lake, untouched by its mud. He should perform meditation while engaged in his worldly affairs. He should, however, be very cautious here and should never fall a prey to the attractions of woman and gold belonging to others. He should be

satisfied with what God has granted to him, and steadily continue his spiritual *Sādhana* ( 29 ). Moreover, he should perform his worldly duties. with utmost care and diligence. He should not shun them through idleness.He should constantly observe and examine his conduct at every step. and should always behave prudently. Imprudence is the source of misery. Still, with all our prudence we must not fail to realise that God's will alone ultimately prevails. Hence we should be ever ready to abide by His will. Wnen we are overwhelmed with dangers. we should not fail to remember Him and perform our duty (30)

iii) **Worldiy Weal** : The moral and spiritual discipline enjoined by 'Practice' and 'Dispassion' described so far, enables an aspirant to attain both 'Worldly Weal' and 'spiritual Bliss'. Both these are really the gifts of God. or the *Ātman*.If we discharge properly the only duty of meditating on the Name of God in the company of saints our *Ātman* will not fail to grant us Bliss. (31)

But people have been all along engaged in enjoying sense-pleasure day and night, for a number of lives in the past, as a result of which they are required to suffer from misery. A seeker can avoid this suffering, if he followed the advice of his Master and performed his meditation properly. Then he would be blessed with happiness both material and spiritual. (32)

Whenever we are required to face difficulties in our worldly life, we should carry on one-pointed meditation. God would then ward off the dangers. They can never be removed only by our personal diligence. Our diligence should be confined to our meditation only. That is all that we can and should do (33). Instead of performing this spiritual discipline, people simply complain about their Fate. What can be said about this folly?(34) " Meditation on the Name of *Hari*(Lord) would drive the obstacles in all directions." Hence without

being anxious about anything we should mind our meditation. Everything would be set right immediately. (35). We would, thereby, also have more and more spiritual experiences and we would realise the secret of spiritual life. (36.)

iv) **Spiritual Bliss :** Spiritual Bliss is the final End of spiritual discipline. It is also called Self-realisation, about the exact nature of which there are good many mis-conceptions. Miracle-mongers easily delude the common folk by the exhibition of their miracles. By offering material gifts which though quite ephemeral, are regarded by them to be very valuable, these miracle-mongers command respect from them like real saints. But those who love the eternal *Ātman*, would never revere such fellows as they would revere realised saints (37). Some others try to imitate the external conduct of saints. How can such hypocrites realise the Self and become genuine saints? (38).

Like miracle-mongering and hypocrisy, mere intellectual learning also cannot be a sure sign of a genuine saint. Self-realisation should not be contaminated by the ego, born of learning, just as it should not be soiled by miracles. So instead of wasting our time in the acquisition of such worthless things, we should earnestly be absorbed in meditation, realise the Self and enjoy His Bliss.(39-40). This spiritual discipline alone is real religion (41-42).

When a soul (*Jīva*) first takes birth in this world by departing from God (*Śiva*) it is endowed with the consciousness of its original Divinity. And when it departs from life ultimately for merging in God, it is also conscious of its former Divinity. But during human life, the embodied soul is deluded by sense-objects. And being forgetful of its Divinity it is engaged in the worldly affairs considering them to be real and valuable. Really the soul (*Jīva*) has no independent existence. God alone has independent existence. Hence the only duty of

the soul is to meditate on God and enjoy His Bliss (43). When the devotee attains this Bliss, he loses his soul-consciousness. He ever lives in God-consciousness. He thus regains his former Divinity. This is the Liberation of Unison. This is the supreme Goal of human life. (44).

*Part I*

# The Path

## (A) Abhyāsa - Practice :

### (I) Philosophic Basis

" Remembrance is *Brahman*-Spiritual Reality; Non-remembrance is *Mâyâ*-Worldly Illusion." Remembrance (of Divine Name) or Knowledge (of Brahman) produces God-consciousness, while non-remembrance ( of Divine Name ) or Ignorance (of Brahman) produces consciousness of Illusion, To be better still,God-consciousness itself is Knowledge and consciousness of Illusion (*Māyâ*) is Ignorance. To stabilise such knowledge, earnest desire or passionate longing (for God) is needed. The fire of burning desire would enkindle the light of knowledge. That is why a saint says: "Fire is the source of Knowledge." This burning desire is the outcome of intense devotion for the Lord. But this devotion cannot sprout or grow without dispassion for sense-objects. That is why saints have told us: " Dispassion is the source of Devotion." Really devotion and dispassion are interdependent. They reciprocate. Dispassion

develops devotion: and devotion develops dispassion: If we thus snap the snare of *Māyā* and increase our devotion, the passionate longing for the Lord produced thereby,would grant us Self-knowledge and merge us in the *Brahman*. This is the state of Liberation in which body-consciousness is completely eliminated. Such a liberated person absorbed in *Brahman* transcends all duties. *Tasya kāryam na vidyate* - He has no obligatory duty. He transcends duty. This higher state can only be attained by meditation on Name Divine. We must ever remember the Name imparted to us by our Spiritual Master Our gaze should ever be fixed on the tip of our nose. The Divine Name should sink deep in the heart. As "mind is the source of Ego-heart", when the Name is constantly associated with the mind, it enters deep down in the heart and is stabilised there. In this way, if we meditate on the Name of *Vithal* (Lord), who is the personal aspect of *Brahman*, along with 21600 breaths created by *Nārāyan*-the Lord, it " would transform our intellect, eliminate our evil passions, create righteous tendencies tendencies in us, and develop our devotion for the Lord." And the*Sādhak* would, then, easily attain the vision of the Lord and become one with Him."

This is the advice of the Master.

( PP. 63-64 ) ⊠

(2) **General Outline** : God is the doer; He is the mover. Not a blade of grass moves but by His Will. His remembrance and grace make both worldly and spiritual life blissful. Such a conviction should support our meditation (on Divine Name). Then alone will it gain in intensity and develop dispassion i.e. disgust for worthless objects. The seeker, then, becomes genuinely dispassionate. He behaves with courage and fortitude and leads his worldly and spiritual

⊠ These pages are from "Letters and Notes by Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj Umadikar" --a book published in Marathi.

life with skill and wisdom. He soon realises that both of them are identical and that both are controlled and directed by His grace alone. This realisation engenders devotion for the Lord in his heart. When this devotion grows and assumes the white heat of intense longing, the seeker becomes fit for God-realisation. He then begins to realise the nature and urges of the inner self. This is termed Illumination ( *Jñāna* ). Such is the general outline of the Pathway to God-realisation. Hence in the worldly life a seeker should attain devotion through dispassion, illumination through intense longing, contact with the Lord through regular meditation on Divine Name. When this contact developes, he will begin to realise the nature and urges of the inner self [ both of himself and of others ] (P.190)

## (3) Blessedness through Devoted Meditation.

We should meditate on the Divine Name with love and devotion. We should not feel drowsy at that time. When our heart is full of joy, we are not assailed either by sloth or by yawning. We should perform our meditation for one hour in the morning and one hour in the evening without fail. This will wipe out all the impure impressions received by our mind in the worldly affairs in which we are engaged during the prior eleven hours. Then we will begin to realise our short-comings and learn to discriminate between the essential and the non-essential. Our ardour for meditation will grow and we will be powerfully impelled to meditate more and more. We will begin to love God and His Name. This love would then gradually increase and ultimately culminate into " Devotion of Friendship " with and of " Self-surrender " to the Lord. The seeker thereafter, throws his entire burden on Him. Such an absolute self-surrender attracts the grace of the Lord and enables the seeker to enjoy blessedness. These are the ascending stages of devotion, for attaining which firm faith is the main requisite. If we thus perform soulful meditation twice, all the mental impulses would vanish automatically. And we

will at once begin to realise that our *Sadguru* himself is drawn towards us of his own accord. ( P. 106 )

We should carry on our meditation in the prescribed manner. Every moment we should try to observe whether we duly remember the name and whether our gaze is properly fixed. We should steadily fix our gaze on the tip or top of the nose. When we feel sleepy. we should hold our breath till we mentally repeat five to ten Names. This breath-control would remove our slumber. ( P. 338-39 )

We should not neglect to fix our gaze, nor should we forget to repeat the Name. We should lovingly observe the *Vastu*(super-sensuous object) that would reveal itself before us. " Our Lord ", asserts *Nāmadeva*, is powerful and affluent. I am prepared to stake my very life for the vindication of the truth of my assertion " We should implicitly trust this assertion and try to entertain this very sentiment about God. We would then have the same experience. (P. 337)

## 4) Meditation under any Circumstance.

A person is required to Worship God for success in his worldly business as well.That would form his Worldly Religion, useful for his wordly life.But that is not all in all.That alone will not bring about fulfilment in his life On the other hand,he should adopt the path of Spiritual Religion and try to identify himself with God through proper devotion. He should learn to adapt himself even to (adverse) places and (trying)circumstances in which he would be called upon to live through the will of God,and should never give up meditation on the Divine Name on any account. He should constantly meditate day and night and enormously increase the total number of Names meditated upon by him. He should. thus augment the treasure of his merit. This would remove all the obstacles in his path of devotion and grant him mental peace and delight.And through the grace of the Lord he will not be required, thereafter, to face such a difficult situation. The Lord will keep his devotee in a joyful condition. " Tne power of Divine Name will", as assured by *Sri. Māhārāj*, " protect him. " (PP. 78-79)

## 5) Two Types of Devotion.

Devotion is ot two types: Devotion coupled with desire- 'interested devotion' and Devotion free from any desire - ' disinterested devotion.' Human greed makes a man love interested devotion.The interested devotion accumulates merit no doubt. But that merit is non-eternal, perishable. It contributes to non-eternal liberations like *Salokatā* or 'residence in the celestial region of the Lord,' and *Samīpatā* or 'residence in the nearness of the Lord.' When the merit of the seeker is exhausted. he would be driven out of that region. Ephemeral, likewise, are the positions of Indra, Siva and other gods. But self-knowledge in the form of Self-realisation.attained through the grace of a *Sadguru*, will grant *Sāyujyatā* or 'eternal liberation of unison with the Lord.' Realised saints indentify themselves with their Self. They are, hence, freed from the rounds of re-births. Persons engaged in interested devotion are subjected to the travail of birth and death. Hence the path of an ordinary *Guru* which brings merit through worldly religion can bear no comparison with the path of a *Sadguru* which grants Self-realisation through spiritual religion.To consider both the paths to be one and the same is pure delusion. One brings perishable merit. while the other grants eternal Self-realisation, the liberation of the unison with the Lord. One involves the seeker in the rounds of birth and death while the other grants him the form of his own Self. (PP. 257-58 )

## (6) Devotion should ever be Disinterested.

A son obeys his father by regarding obedience as his duty.He does not carry out the behests of his father with the expectation of any happiness from him in future. In his childhood he learns to regard such obedience simply as his duty, which lends goodness to his behaviour. And this goodness in the long run, enables him to gain the credit of raising the moral eminence of his family even upto 42 generations past.Delighted at such a fine behaviour of his son,the father,

of his own accord, fulfils all the desires of his son and tries to make him happy. He constantly takes care of his son's welfare, keeps him in a dignified position and tries to enhance his glory.Such is the fruit of the disinterested affection and service of the father by the son.

Similarly, as the Lord is the father of us all, He deserves our disinterested devotion--meditation.We should perform our devotional meditation, with the pure desire of spreading the glory and devotion of the Lord in all places. We should not expect any worldly gain thereby. If meditation is carried on in this disinterested manner,God will fulfil all the desires of His devotee. Such a disinterested devotion will make both worldy and spiritual life successful and blissful. (p.40)

## (7) Shun Desire and Win the Lord :

Our mind makes a show of devotion.But its inner craving is for the enjoyment of sense-objects.When we gain worldly profit through devotion, we regard it as superb and pose that we like devotion alone.But really we are after sense--objects. Has such a person ever attained real happiness by pursuing them? Still man is attached to sense-objects alone, on account of his inner craving for sense-pleasure. He cares mainly for worldly profit and loss and hence he is attached to them alone, both in his worldly as well as in his spiritual life. He, thus, does not entertain real devotion for the Lord. As he is not able to control his mind at all, what can a *Sadguru* do for him? Therefore. ' First control the mind and then seek the Lord !' says a Saint. Unless we relinquish our desire for sense-objects, we won't attain God. But poor fellow ! man does not realise this at all. He pays no heed to devotion. He neglects it completely. Such is the powerful attraction of sense - objects. Can an abject slave of the senses ever become a king of devotion ? ( PP.208-209 )

## (8) How to Control the Wanderings of the Mind ? :

Mind is supremely fickle. It is extremely difficult to check its wanderings.It instinctively hankers after sense-objects. It does not like to meditate.There is only one method of controlling the mind. Says Sri Kabir : " Let go the mind, but not the body. " The mind may go wherever it pleases but the body should not be allowed to follow it. If the body does not follow the mind in its pursuits of sense-objects,it will automatically turn back after some time from them. Such a practice would remove the fickleness of the mind and give us joy. Just mark, to what a sorry plight did the mind even of such a Saint as Ramdās bring him, though he did not lead a worldly life. He, however, controlled the strong urges of his mind, did not allow his body to pursue them and behaved in such a way as not to defile his devotion to his master. Thus did he achieve blessedness and lasting glory in the world even to this day. We should always remember the obligation conferred by such great Saints upon us, have full faith in their teachings and act according to their instructions. Then will our worldly as well as spiritual life be endowed with bliss. Hence, we should take a vow of not touching the wealth and woman, belonging to other persons and perform meditation on Divine Name. with firm faith."Those who take a medicine of *Viṭhal*(Divine Name) should observe dietary restrictions as well".

We should ponder deeply over the aphorisms : " Fire is the source of Illumination and "Dispassion is the source of Devotion. " Attachment to senses brings about forgetfulness of Name. Since we are habituated to non-practice of meditation, the cravings of our mind do not leave us. We don't become free from desires which deprive us of our real happiness. If we strenghten our will, apply all our senses to meditation and practise it with resolute regularity, we would understand the nature of all our inner mental urges. We would then gain mental balance, learn to discriminate essential and non-essential things and enjoy all-round Bliss. (P.81,PP.19-20)

## 9) Proper Use of Sorrow.

*Māyā* (attachment) is of two types : the first is worldly and the second,spiritual. So we must look at every event in life from two aspects. The worldly aspect is associated with the body (and the spiritual aspect, with the soul). The intelligent persons will readily realise the nature of spiritual *Māyā*. For that we should believe the words of the saints to be real and consider them to be reliable authorities, in this respect. So long as we are untouched by sorrow, we should practise meditation on Divine Name regularly and delightfully, for as long a time as possible. Then we would not feel keenly the stings of both types of sorrow-worldly as well as spiritual-when they would overcome us. Saint Tukārām used to be very anxious, day and night, for serving his parents. He was also practising meditation along with his service. Hence, when he was required to experience great sorrow at the sad demise of his mother, he thought that God removed his anxiety about serving her and enabled him to attend to his meditation peacefully. He has expressed these thoughts of his, in the following *Abhanga* :

*Abhaãga*

My father died, I Knew it not.
I was free then from worldly care.
Now my Lord ! alone we are left;
None with us can interfere.
My wife died and attained liberation;
The Lord freed me from attachment.
My son died, it was good for me.
The Lord freed me again from it.
My mother died in my presence.
My anxiety, says Tukā, vanished hence.

These thoughts are the outcome of the worldly aspect.

Now about the spiritual aspect which is really profound and deep. But it can be easily understood by the intelligent. Sorrow is the result of our care for the body. But the word "*Dukkha*☼" (sorrow) is also applicable to "*Ātman*". "Du" means "*Dūra hoṇe*" (Marathi) which means—to vanish; "Kha" means "*Kharyā rītīne*"-in the real sense or sincerely. If we sincerely act up to the advice of our Master, we would be able to evolve our Self-consciousness which would drive our care away. If this hidden deep meaning of "*Dukkha*" penetrates into our heart, it would lend satisfaction to us. "He whose heart is pure, needs no advice sure." We should ever remember this saying and utilise our time in practising meditation according to the following restrictions (*Katta*) : (Regularity, Firm resolve, Steady posture, Fixed gaze either on the tip or top of the nose, Mental repetition of *Nāma* along with the breath and earnest love and joy). This is the best course to be adopted by the well--cultured aspirants. Our attitude brings about corresponding results. Goodness brings happiness; and wickedness, sorrow. Meditation on the Name imparted by the *Sadguru*. will enable the seeker to attain the same position of a *Sadguru*. Hence we must feel that everything happens according to the will of the Lord and that too for our own good and lead our life in peace and bliss. We should intimate our inner anguish to our Master and be ever absorbed in the meditation on the Name Divine. This will grant all-round bliss to us. (PP. 14-16.)

## (10) Constant Awareness of our Spiritual Duty.

If we are eternally conscious about our spiritual duty, our practice of meditation would continue unabated. If a person is granted a high position by God, he naturally feels that he is great and begins to behave in a manner befitting his fresh position. He forgets and forsakes his former mean behaviour and adopts a fresh one suited to his new position. Likewise, if a person constantly entertains the idea

☼. Sri Maharaj at times gave fanciful interpretations to words to create a sense of novelty - to create interest among his disciples.

that he is a wise *Sādhaka* and performs meditation accordingly. he attains the same position by his absorption in meditation. He should keep in mind the maxim: "Remembrance (of *Nāma*) is Spiritual Reality and non-remembrance of the same is worldly illusion." And he should be always engaged in the practice of meditation.

Now devotion to God primarily needs dispassion for sense-objects. There is a great need of dispassion for the proper development of devotion. Unless our mind gets itself dis-engaged, at least partially, from the worldly life, it cannot practise meditation at all. In the same way, "Fire is the source of knowledge." For knowledge or illumination. the fire of burning desire must be enkindled. It is only the intense longing produced in the heart that would lead to God-realisation.Likewise. 'Mind is the source of Ego or Heart.' Constant practice of mental meditation on the Name enables the Name to penetrate deep down in the heart. This will bring immediate spiritual experiences. We will realise our own nature.And we will develop 'discrimination' (*Tāku*)-(Kannada) and learn to distinguish between the essential and the non-essential. We would also be able to know how each factor in our worldly life can be made to serve the cause of our spiritual elevation. For this we should sincerely and faithfully try to develop both the intensity and period of our meditation by practising it with soulful concentration for a long time. If the period of our meditation increases. our ardour for it also gradually intensifies. Hence we should ever try to be aware of our spiritual duty. (P. 102)

## (11) Flaming Devotion.

All should intensify Meditation and devotion.The devotional festivals (*Saptāh*) should be celebrated with great pomp and splendour. The Lord would then be pleased to enhance our welfare. But our egoism unconsciously introduces artificiality. in our devotional functions. Inwardly we feel

sluggishness, weariness and disgust, still outwardly we make a formal show of enthusiasm. This is really artificiality. It is this attitude that turns a person into his own enemy.Hence even though he performs devotional functions and practises meditation on Name Divine, he is required to suffer from poverty and dryness of emotion. He does not experience the delight from devotion. He ever remembers the sense-pleasure enjoyed by him so long, and revels in that imaginary joy. But he tries to conceal it from others by putting up an outward show of dispassion. We should learn to experience joy from meditation just as we feel pleasure from sense-objects. And the joy should remain steady and firm in our heart.It must be firmly implanted in our heart. Then we would realise the real nature of the Lord and devotee, as well as the relation existing between them. (P.39)

## 12) Sublimation of Emotions.

Our *Sādhana* should bring about awakening and sublimation of our emotions. Our desire should be directed towards God devotion; our anger, towards self-control--the control of the senses; our greed should be for receiving the *Tīrtha* - (sacred water) and *Prasād*-- ( gracious gift ) from the holy persons; our attraction should be for the association of the good; our arrogance should be directed towards the wicked; and our disgust should be centered on the worldly life. In the same way, we should desire to develop devotion; we should be angry with our body-consciousness: we should be intoxicated by the vision of '*Vastu*' — spiritual entity: i.e. we should be maddened by its sight and finally we should be jealous of *Māya*. If all these six emotions are transferred in this way, our evil thoughts would vanish; we would begin to entertain good thoughts as a result of the salutary change in our intellect. And we would attain salvation.

We should develop fascination for the '*Vastu*' and love for *Nāma*. We should meditate on Name, with our eyes

half-open. We would then transcend the duties of worldly life. To have a vision of the '*Vastu*' with half-open eyes, is itself *Sahaja Samādhi*—spontaneous attunement with the Lord When that is attained the shackles of worldly life would be snapped. The seeker would be free from their clutches. Even though he lives and moves among the influences of all the sense-objects(*Guṇās*),he transcends them and becomes*Nirguṇa*. This Pathway to God grants him eternal splendour of Self-illumination. He attains both *Biṅdu* and *Tirtha*. He gets the vision of *Biṅdu*—Spiriton—Spiritual Atom and enjoys the flavour of *Aṁṛta*—spiritual nectar and he finally becomes one with them and becomes *Cirañjīvi*—immortal and eternal. He gets rid of his long-standing soul-consciousness and develops Self-consciousness — God-consciousness. He thus attains Godhead.

For such a consummation, the Name Divine should penetrate deep into the inner being; the vision should be fixed on the *Vastu* at the tip of the nose or on the spiritual Eye. Then alone will the *Sādhaka* attain the fulfilment of his life. He will achieve genuine dignity, which would enable him to enjoy the admiration of the three worlds. (PP. 250-51)

## (13) Internal and external Aspects of Devotion

Meditation on Name Divine is the internal aspect of Devotion. *Pothi*-reading of sacred books, *Bhajañ*--singing the glory of the Lord, and *Ārati* - waving of lights before the Image of the Lord-these are its external aspects. These need not be considered as merely avoidable accessories. As they have been enjoined by a *Sadguru*, they should be performed with sincere faith.This would help to intensify our meditation on the Name. It would also contribute to the health of the body. If this idea gets firm lodgement in the heart, we would be able to have actual experience about it, and enjoy the bliss resulting from the experience.

It is true that mere *Kākadāratī*--waving the light before the Image at dawn—won't lead directly to salvation. But as it is performed early at dawn, it would remove drowsiness from the eyes, drive away sloth and slumber and enhance the quality of meditation. Hence we should take its aid to facilitate our meditation. (PP. 335-36)

## (14) Need of External Acts of Devotion.

We should not unnecessarily increase these external acts of devotion. At the same time we should not treat them with scant respect as well. We should, however, carefully observe the fine distinction between them. For the spread of devotion saints are required to pay attention to these external accessories as well. When these are properly performed, the glory of devotion to God is greatly enhanced. A *Sadguru* is perfectly conversant with all these things. According to *Śri Samartha*, a *Sadguru* lacks nothing at all. But it must be noted that to be wholely engaged in reading *Pothī* and performing *Bhajan* alone, is the sign of an ordinary *Guru* and not that of a *Sadguru*. People,however,regard this characteristic as that of a *Sadguru* which is not proper. Really the characteristics of a *Sadguru* are quite different.He combines in himself the characteristics both of a *Guru* as well as of a *Sadguru*,-the former being the products of body-consciousness and the latter those of Self-consciousness.The *Sadguru* performs the above-mentioned devotional acts with his body-consciousness quite well, but internally he identifies himself with his Self. He performs all these functions for the spread of the glory of God-devotion among the people. But inwardly he is unattached to them. ( P.283 )

## (15) Festivals Enhance Zeal.

The *Saptāh* Festival was celebrated with great pomp and delight. If such festivals are celebrated with due faith

and devotion, they would contribute to our mental delight. The discussions carried on about spiritual life, as well as the experiences of past Saints related and listened to, during such festivals, will greatly enhance our relish, love and zeal for spiritual life.

The Path of Devotion has two avenues : one of worldly devotion-related to worldly life and the other of spiritual devotion-related to spiritual life. Since we have practised worldly devotion for a long time, and since we have experienced and enjoyed the joy resulting from it and have developed attachment for it. we consider that kind of devotion and the joy resulting therefrom, alone as real. And naturally, we feel love and enthusiasm for it. But since we rarely practise spiritual devotion, we don't get spiritual experiences and so we don't realise its real value and worth. And hence we refuse to believe in the reality of the bliss resulting from it. Naturally we don't love it and sincerely aspire to attain it. But once we taste the bliss accruing from it, the love and joy we would be experiencing then, is simply indescribable. To enjoy such a bliss we must practise meditation with all our heart. This would produce love for it, and would stabilise and intensify our devotion for the Lord. Thereafter it would produce dispassion (for sense-objects) which is really the source of devotion. It would also intensify our longing for the Lord which is the source-fire of knowledge or illumination. However, all this entirely depends upon our soulful meditation. We should, hence, try to increase the duration and concentration of this practice. The extension in duration will gradually intensify our concentration and devotion. Then the *Sādhaka* will automatically begin to know everything. He will not require any further verbal instructions at all.

Worldly life and Spiritual life, Duality and Identity. Censure and Praise are pairs of opposites in which, without the help of one we cannot understand the other. Identity can not be understood without duality; in the absence of censure

the value of praise would not be realised. Likewise, without the help of worldy life, spiritual life cannot be properly realised. Worldly life is reprehensible no doubt. But its aid is quite necessary for attaining the commendable spiritual life.We must realise all this properly and through the proper practice of meditation attain love and bliss of spiritual life. (PP.183-184)

## (16) Listening and Reflection in the Company of *Sādhakas* would grant Bliss.

We should ever try to live in the company of the good (*Sādhakas*). At the time of the *Saptāh* -festivals, we will have the pleasure of meeting great devotees. Meditation in their holy company and discussions on spiritual topics carried on by them would enable all to enjoy the delight arising from it. (P. 113).

The listening of the spiritual discourses would tranquilise the mind. The time spent in listening to them need not be considered as wasted. Hence we should repeatedly read the same books and listen to the same discourses. We should constantly carry on this practice. *Śri Nimbargi Mahārāj* used to state that this practice also is in a way,as good as meditation. for a seeker. Hencs we should be regularly engaged in listening to spiritual discourses. (P. 48)

We should, however,read with due attention and concentration. We should try to understand every item in it and realise its essence.Such an acquisition of spiritual knowledge should not be regarded as a fruitless pursuit. We should try to digest the knowledge so acquired thoroughly.Then it would penetrate deep down in the heart. But at the same time, care should be taken to see that it does not flatter our egoism. ( P. 222 )

## (17) Ardent Longing will Grant the Vision of the *Ātman*.

In worldly life. a person pays sincere attention towards the upkeep of his body. He fails to realise that this attention delays the advent of spiritual experience. Instead, if he begins to pay more attention for the realisation of the *Ātman*. he won't require much time for getting spiritual experience and there won't be any dirth for him thereafter. But from his birth,a person is conscious only of his body—considers himself as body only, and he is not conscious of his *Ātman* at all. Even then, he should, to a certain extent at least, try to ascertain whether he is remembering the Divine Name. whether his gaze is fixed on the tip of the nose and whether he has the vision of the *Vastu*. He should ever remember the following words of advice :

Worship the *Guru* and meditate on his Form.
For God resides in the *Guru's* Frame.

He should keep company of those *Sâdhakas* ' whose mind is ever absorbed in Divine Name and Form'. This will enkindle the fire of longing and would instantly grant the vision of the *Ātman*. (P.250)

## (18) Dedicate Everything to the Lord.

We should perform our prescribed duty, skilfully, intelligently and calmly. Still we must bear in mind that God is all-powerful and His will alone is supreme and behave accordingly. We must always submit to His dictates. We should not waste our life under the delusion that we are the doers. None in the past have departed by making thorough adjustment of everything behind him. We will have to face the same fate sooner or later. Hence whenever we come across any difficulty in our wordly life, we must remember the Lord and discharge our duty. Never should we labour under the delusion that we are the doers. We should ever entertain the feeling that God's will should prevail. In short,

we should dedicate our mind, intellect and will to the Lord, utilize them all for realising God and try to submit to His will. (PP.11-12)

## (19) Complete Self-surrender.

On account of our body-consciousness, various ideas and feelings crop up in our minds, Those feelings and ideas that are noble and intense and those that touch the divine chord in us, are instantly fulfilled by the Lord. For He is the Abode of Compassion. God fulfils all our sincere aspirations. Hence our real good consists in willingly accepting His occasional dispensations. From the point of view of our worldly life, we may gain or lose, we may attain happiness or sorrow. At such a time we must be attached to and absorbed in God and regard every event as contributing to our ultimate good as it is the product of His Will. We should hence be free from worry and should be constantly engaged in remembering Him. Everything would be automatically accomplished. This is real Self-surrender. (PP.177-178)

## (B) *Vairāgya*-Dispassion:

## (20) We should not forget Spirituality in our Worldly Life.

You were kindly intimating to us through your frequent letters your well-being which was contributing to the growth off our mutual affection. But recently as you don't find time and leisure, in your worldly affairs, you appear to have forgotten us, which is rather surprising. In worldly life a person cannot afford to be forgetful; he has to be alert. Otherwise, he will have to suffer instant loss. But in spiritual life, he can very well afford to be negligent. Because the loss sustained thereby, though great, is invisible. But you should very well

remember that both worldly and spiritual life are directed by the power of the Lord Himself. Hence you should not neglect spiritual life. You should daily allot more and more time for meditation on Divine Name and perform it with love, regularity and firm resolve. Some devotees regularly come to Inchagiri on every full-moon day. Since they sincerely pay attention to the development of their devotion, it naturally increases. They thus serve the Master.If a person observes some voluntary restrictions he would remember spiritual life. If not, he would forget devotion and would be blinded-deluded by passion. Hence one should sincerely observe salutary regulations in life. (PP. 77-78)

## (21) TheWise should Attend both to the Worldly as well as Spiritual Life.

I wrote to you a few letters and I also personally told you that you should pay proper attention to your studies. Still, to shun your study, you are relating to me lofty philosophical principles. This is not proper for you. A person who performs both the worldly and spiritual life is really wise. You should sincerely attend to your studies in order that you may be able to discharge your worldly duties quite well. If you try to neglect your studies under the pretext of attending to spiritual discipline, we both would expose ourselves to public censure. Hence carry on your study properly. And at the same time meditate on the Divine Name by fixing your eyes on the tip of your nose. This will ensure success in everything. You need not worry in any way. (P.143)

## (22) Dhṛtarāṣṭra won't Understand *Vidur-niti.*

Ill-gotten, filthy wealth makes a man insolent. His intellect becomes deluded. His reason is destroyed. So long as he retains that wealth, he is overpowered by nasty feelings and desires. He thereby gets addicted to vicious habits which deprive him of all his wealth and reduce him to abject poverty.

Even under such miserable circumstances, he does not become free from his delusion. Just as the repeated moral advice of Vidura could not remove the delusion of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's intellect, the delusion of such a person does not disappear, even though he is advised any number of times. Blinded by delusion, which has taken firm root in his intellect, his attraction or liking for evil habits does not leave him. In the same way, those that are already blessed by a *Sādguru*, but who have not attained the vision of Divine Effulgence by performing the *Sādhana* properly, do they not also deserve to be called Dhṛtarāṣṭrās? How can they understand *Vidura-nīti* ? How can they relish the advice that they should adopt moral conduct by eschewing their evil passions? Hence our *Sādguru* has been repeatedly advising us to give up our blind delusion and behave morally. (PP.181-182)

## (23) Pride has Fall.

In his worldly life a person requires wealth, house, property, wife, children etc. This produces the feelings of desire, selfishness, lust, anger, avarice etc. in his heart. Along with them, his ego increases and he tries to acquire honour and fame. Such is the case in worldly life. In spiritual life he renounces all these emotions, considers God-devotion to be all in all, and regards nothing else to be worth - having. He begins sincerely to listen to sacred discourses, to adore the Lord and to meditate on Divine Name. But at the same time, he begins to feel : "I am a devotee-I am non-attached" and thus falls a prey to subtle egoism. Still, when he is required to depart from the world, both the objects of his egoism remain behind him. No object of fame accompanies him. Hence such a person proves an utter failure both in worldly and spiritual life. Who is, then, a really great man ? Whose fame is everlasting? A saint who renounces egoism and realises his identity with his Self, alone enjoys eternal renown. (P.268)

## (24) Internal Purification through Repentance.

" I am a sinner; I am a vile wicked person ! In my boyhood and youth, I committed evil deeds through ignorance.

Have mercy on me, O Lord ! and pardon me !" If a person entertains such feelings, and is scorched with intense repentance, his heart would be automatically purified. And he whose heart is purified needs no words of advice. He should forget his past sins and should no longer worry about them. He should. thereafter go on meditating on the Divine Name. (P.63.)

## (25) Need of Forgiveness and Benevolence.

Dharma-Duty is mainly two-fold—worldly and spiritual. Even worldly duty is not observed at present. What to speak of spiritual duty? People care for their body only, and observe their duties about them alone. But no-where do we find the presence of genuine *Swadharma*. In this worldly duty, forgiveness plays an important part-has got a high status. We should not mind how others behave with us. We should not care for their ill-treatment given to us. We should readily forgive them and make them happy. The creditor should relieve the misery of this debtor from which he is suffering as a result of his evil desires ( and mis-deeds ), by extending proper help to him in his calamity. This is his proper duty. Likewise. the father should forgive his son and the teacher, his disciples, even though they commit thousands of sins. It is the duty of elders to make their sons and disciples happy, by lending them their own high status. If they are engaged in performing this duty, their mind would be engaged in making others happy. Hence they will naturally be indifferent about their personal gain or loss. They will pay particular attention to their *Swardharma*-special duty of benevolence only. Hence such persons achieve greatness and blessedness in life.

How can greatness and blessedness be attained without wearing away themselves? People don't care to observe even such-worldly *Dharma*. How can they then, understand the spiritual *Dharma* of Self-realisation? It would never be

understood even if-they perform sacrifices etc. as well as austere penance in the form of mortification of the flesh. It can only be attained through instructions from the *Guru*. No Self-knowledge is possible without the initiation by a realised *Sadguru*. ( P. 30 )

In the worldly life, no person behaves in a manner conducive to the happiness of other people. His whole attention is focussed merely on his own personal gain or loss. This is not good. But this is not a matter to be told or taught by others. It is to be realised only by himself.Really few persons are there who behave with discretion by taking into consideration the circumstances of time and place. Their want of discretion involves them into the snare of delusion (*Māyā*). Caught in it they are subjected to a good deal of suffering. If we impart happiness and respect to others, we will get the same in return from others as well, as a result of which we will be happy. Hence, when we find others behaving badly with us, we must regard it as a result of our own mistakes—defects. We are ourselves responsible for the justice or injustice done to us. We would lay the blame on others, find fault with others and justify our own conduct by considering ourselves to be true and good. This is the sign of *Tamas*-ignorance. But a person considers it as the sign of knowledge and wisdom, doggedly sticks to it and continues to maintain the same behaviour.One cannot help behaving like that. For " how can these greedy fellows, deluded by the *Māyā*, realise the glory of the goodness born of devotion to the *Guru*? None but the devotees can realise the nature of the mental poise of the Saints (P. 229).

## (26) Forgiveness, Compassion and Peace would Grant Bliss.

In both worldly as well as spiritual life, the Lord has granted some of His powers to man.Hence, he must entertain forgiveness, compassion and peace in his worldly pursuits.

Likewise, he must exhibit them in spiritual life as well. For, the Lord does not possess either greatness or smallness. He is neither great nor small. He is entirely dependent upon His devotees for them. His greatness or littleness is realised by people, by observing the behaviour of His devotees. Hence the devotees ought to express forgiveness jn their behaviour, both in the worldly as well as spiritual life. Even an iota of forgiveness would lend intense delight to both worldly and spiritual life. Jayadeva courageously forgave and received universal applause and glory. Therefore, constant acts of forgiveness would result in satisfaction. delight and glory, in both the paths. These virtues would lend a fillip to the Path of Knowledge as well. The exhibition of forgiveness, compassion and peace in the behaviour of devotees would inspire people to worship the Lord with reverential·devotion. Realised saints also are endowed with these virtues. King Janaka is a standing example of this. What a supreme forgiveness and compassion did he possess? What a superb peace did he enjoy? It is simply ineffable. This is why his fame has been resounding even to this day. Hence a seeker of the Path of Knowledge should necessarily develop these virtues. ( PP. 106-107 )

## (27) We should live in the *Māyā* untouched like a Lotus Leaf.

Man desires that the Lord should not throw him—entangle him, in the meshes of *Māyā*.But it is futile to entertain this desire. Even the Lord Himself incarnates in the *Māyā*, carries on-displays His sport in it.How, then,can we be freed from *Māyā*?When we are residing in the domain of *Màyā*,we should develop devotion for the Lord, by remaining unaffected by *Māyā*, *Mâyā* then, could not affect us. We should learn to participate in the sport of the Lord, in the *Māyâ* of the Lord, like the Lord Himself. Never should we forget that *Māyā* belongs to the Lord Himself. Then we won't be troubled by *Māyā*. (P. 24)

## (28) Need of Constant Vigilance

(Addressed to his sons)

Officials are very forgetful. Such persons are likely to forget their spiritual duty.Hence they should be very vigilant. Very often they are required to face delusive attractions. They thereby lose their awareness of the past and the future. They begin to think about the sense objects only and thus forget their merits, as a result of which they are required to suffer from misery. Therefore, you should ever be engaged in meditation (on Name Divine). You should feel satisfied with what God has granted to you and adopt the path of merit. That would ward off difficulties both in worldly and spiritual life and invest them with great delight. Hence you should meditate with sincerity. satisfaction and joy. You should not waste your time in worthless chat with the friends. Yoy may, however, spend some time in the company of higher officials. That would enhance your status. In short, be intelligent and cautious in your behaviour. It is true, that you alone are required to reap the bitter fruits of your friendship with idlers. Still, your relatives are required to hear and witness the misery you suffer from. They will feel worried and sorrowful thereby. Hence you should not create such situations for them. You should ever remember that Saints instantly realise your secret thoughts and feelings.even though they are hidden deep down in your heart.

You should be cautious in your dealings with the Government. You cannot anticipate the impending attack on you from that quarter. Hence you must be very vigilant and just, in such matters. You should not entertain any grudge against anybody. You should not be malicious towards your servants. You should use sweet words but should always be internally vigilant. Never should you accept any bribe. You will have to account for it in future.Never touch woman and wealth belonging to others.You should even take an oath about it.You should

be extremely careful about them.

In fine, you should be disciplined, truthful and impartial in your conduct. Act in such a manner that fragrant news about your behaviour should ever be heard. Then alone will you be fit for the Path of Devotion. (PP.27-28 & 267-268)

## (29) Skill in Worldly Life is conducive to Spiritual Life.

(Addressed to his sons)

Obey your parents. It will fulfil your aspirations and enhance your fame. Regularly carry on meditation on the Name Divine. Perform your worldly duties with shrewdness and skill. You should lead both worldly life as well as spiritual life and live joyfully. (P. 53)

Don't do anything that entails mental doubt. You should enjoy mental peace and satisfaction and not feel worried on any account. You should try to accomplish your object so as to give satisfaction both to yourself as well as to others. Still since the Lord is the real doer and director, you should consider everything that takes place, to be beneficial to you. (P.13)

Never waste your time in indolence. Distribute all the duties among yourselves. One should look after the office work. The second should always move about and supervise the work in the *Paraganā*. The third should attend to agriculture, both irrigated and non-irrigated. And the fourth should take care of the home-management. If all of you while away your time by simply sitting in one place, you will have to suffer from penury. Various difficulties will have, then, to be endured by you in your life thereby, not to speak of the internal, mutual bickerings at home, that would ensue therefrom.

All of you should attend to your business regularly, with diligence and intelligence, and maintain your dignity. You should introspect every morning and evening and try to ascertain the nature of the business done during the 12 hours as well as the gain and loss resulting from it. You should constantly be engaged in such introspective reflection. If you fail to do this you will miss happiness; you will have to face poverty, dispute and delusion; you will lose your dignified status. And thus you will have to lead the life of a worthless person and be a mere burden to the earth. Therefore, if you are fully engaged in carrying on your business regularly and sincerely, you will have no time for any other affair; you will not be tempted to do wicked deeds, to keep bad company, which would result in the welfare of all of you.

You may make friends with all. But your friendship should vary with the nature of each individual.Your behaviour should be suitable to the status of each person. You should employ sweet words in your talk with all.But you should try to keep up your dignity. You should never disclose your innermost secret to anybody. But you should not, at the same time, let them know that you have not disclosed it. Such should be your tactful way of behaviour.

You should always try for the welfare of your dependants. You should render all possible help to them and should not leave them to their fate.You should regard them as your own kith and kin and always treat them with sympathy and compassion.To be brief : you should be sincere and truthful in all your actions, conduct and transactions. You should never fail to keep your word. There should be no disparity between your words and deeds. Your conduct should be free from this blemish. Your word should not precede your deed. Try to keep your counsel till the deed is accomplished.

Don't maintain undue intimacy with persons of low status. Even if you happen to develop intimacy, don't trust

them. Even when you trust them, don't disclose family feuds to them. Even though, at times, you are required to disclose them, don't be guided by their advice. Because they will sow seeds of dissension among the family members. These crafty fellows will make a show of your well-wisher and accomplish their own selfish interest. Their knavery will be revealed at last, no doubt, but till then the family feuds will lower your prestige and destroy your dignity. Hence you should be very cautious from the start.

Along with the business in your worldly life, you should not fail to meditate on the Name Divine, as much as possible, according to your capacity, at least-in the morning, at noon and in the evening. You should regularly read Pothi (Sacred Book) as mush as possible. You should wave camphor before God if you can afford to do so. Thereafter, you should worship Him in accordance with your respective practice. You will thus attain fulfilment, both in worldly as well as spiritual life. God will grant constant happiness and peace to such people. They will never be unhappy. You should behave with tact, intelligence and shrewdness. You should surrender your mind and intellect to the Lord and act up to His Will. ( PP. 9 to 11 )

*Part II*

# The Goal

## (A) Worldly Weal

### (30) God alone Grants Bliss both in Worldly and in Spiritual Life

All the delightful events in your life were an outcome of Divine grace- the grace of the *Ātman*, as He alone is the doer and director. The great Master (*Sadguru*) had arranged like that and hence you could enjoy the delight automatically. It is the Spirit-the *Ātman*-in your heart that is the real *Sadguru*. Since you are absorbed in His meditation, you have become an object of His affection. So His grace brought about the events that granted you delight. Hence you should ever remember this:"Remembrance(*of Divine Name)* is Brahman -*(Spiritual Reality)* and non-remembrance *(of the same)* is *Māyā* (*Worldly Illusion*)." You should always keep company of those who have firmly installed the Name and Form of the Lord in their hearts, and meditate on the Divine Name in the company of such Saints. If you fulfil these

conditions the *Ātman* will grant you happiness in all possible ways as has been already experienced by you. Since such an experience has purified your heart, you need no further instruction (PP. 95-96).

He whose grace has granted you this delight, will not fail to bestow the same in all possible ways in future as well. He will protect you at all times. Therefore, without giving quarter for worry that comes in the way of your delight, you should carry on meditation as much as possible whenever you get leisure. You should continue your meditation by fixing your gaze on the tip of your nose at all times—while walking, eating, drinking, sitting and writing. That is quite sufficient. Don't entertain any doubt about its efficacy. Constant meditation is enough to make you joyful. (P. 115)

## (31) God's Grace Removes Anxiety

Erelong, on account of famine, man had to suffer from worry. Even then he was remembering the Lord and His Name. Now that the famine has vanished, he has forgotten the Lord and has been engaged in his worldly avocations He has been very much concerned about making provision for his life by amassing wealth. When at times the devotees are required to suffer, some of them continue to ponder on their misery alone. Their heart is ever troubled by the misery. Naturally they forget their prime duty of meditation on the Name Divine. Moreover, as they employ their ears, eyes and tongues, for hearing, seeing and talking about senses-objects, they accumulate a good deal of sin thereby. But on account of their ignorance, they suppose that this suffering is absolutely unavoidable. However, if they adopt the path of Devotion, as instructed by the *Sadguru* and engage their ears, eyes and tongues in the service of the Lord and carry on their meditation sincerely at all times, they would amass a large fund of merit. All obstacles would vanish thereby and they would experience happiness and delight both in their worldly as well as spiritual life.

At the same time, discrimination would be awakened in them which would direct their attention towards God. The following thought would, then, dawn upon them and lend them the requisite courage :

"We have not brought any object along with us while coming in this world and will not carry anything while departing from it. Our main duty is to meditate on the Divine Name. We should ever care for it as there is nothing else excepting the Lord. He alone is the real doer and director. Not a blade of grass moves but by His will. His meditation and grace would destroy all sins committed in our past lives. Merit would accumulate thereby and would grant us spontaneous delight."

When this wisdom is firmly rooted in the heart, all sins would disappear. The obstacles in the *Sādhana* would depart. And body, mind and heart would, at once gain the requisite health and vigour. Body would become healthy; mind, pure; and heart would be filled with devotion, for the Lord. But this wisdom should spontaneously blossom in the heart. It should be directly experienced. It should not be merely an intellectual conception.Then alone will everything be realised. If you don't perform sincere *Sādhana* how can you attain peace? It you don't render service to the Lord, how can you expect any salary? Hence you should adopt and follow the holy path of Meditation on the Divine Name. This is our request to you.

But persons give up this path of merit and take care of their bodies and sense-objects with all their heart. They are fully enamoured of sense-pleasure. Hence they suffer from penury and misery. They don't try to understand the remedy for removing this misery. Really they should feel ashamed of this ignorance and meditate with full faith on the Divine Name granted by the great *Sadguru*. Then they will fully enjoy delight both in their worldly as well as spiritual life. Such is the Path of Wisdom advocated by *Sri Sadguru* (PP.189-190).

## (32) It Removes Calamities.

When we are assailed by calamities in our worldly life the Lord will remove them, if we perform meditation on Divine Name with exclusive devotion. In case we are devoted to and worship a particular personal Form (*of the Lord*), He would assume that Form and protect the devotee in diverse ways. He has done that in the past and He does the same even now. Such illustrations can be found in the *Bhakti Vijaya* containing the lives of Saints. Hence, rest assured, that the Lord will ward off all the calamities in your worldly life. You should realise that God will help His devotees in all his affairs and feel glad thereby. You should fully bear in mind that He resides in our hearts as well and gladly carry on your *Sādhana*. This is your principal duty. If you perform it properly the Lord will not fail to perform His duty (*of protecting the devotees*). This is the only means of removing the troubles. As God is the sole doer and director everything happens as He wills. It is wrong to suppose that our deligence and cleverness would bring about better results. Your real deligence should consist in constant meditation. You should ever try to perceive the unperceivable. Real attention consists in observing the Lord with half-closed eyes. This is your prime duty. (P. 36).

## (33) It Destroys the Effects of Past *Karma*

There are two courses viz the worldly life and spiritual life. Of the two, man is familiar more with worldly life and hence likes it the more. He is engaged in experiencing the happiness and misery arising in it. When he is required to face sorrowful situations, he implicitly believes in the stories narrated in the *Purānās* about the experiences of great men under such circumstances, and like them tries to endure his sorrow with fortitude. Even gods had to suffer in the past. They were also required to lead a life of privation. What is ordained by God cannot be avoided; all should enjoy the fruits of their past *Karma* (action). Such a conviction has taken deep root in his

mind. He is not prepared to abandon it at any cost, even at the cost of his life. He has failed to recognise its second spiritual meaning. "Meditation on the Divine Name will destroy the effects of past actions,it will wipe out dictates of God." These are the assurances of Saints. But man refuses to believe in them even though they are repeatedly dinned into his ears several times. He continues to pin his faith in his old theory. entangles himself in the meshes of *Māyā*, suffers a lot and spends his days and nights in constant worry. He harbours passion and irritation in his bosom and utterly ruins himself. Really happiness and sorrow,merit and demerit, honour and dishonour belong to the perishable body and hence they are ail perishable Both these bind a person-ensnare him. He fails to understand how he should behave in the meshes of *Māyā*. He is at a loss to know what course to adopt and what to reject. Under these circumstances he should seek the guidance of great Saints, live in their company, repose implicit trust in them and faithfully practise the discipline prescribed by them. This would grant him lasting bliss. And when this bliss develops a good deal, it would automatically drown all his passion and irritation. This spiritual course, if adopted sincerely, will eliminate the effects of past action. "Who would reverse the Divine Decree? A *Sadguru* would reverse it," so do the Saints declare. Abandoning such a spiritual course, man fondly trusts in the working of Fate and simply wastes his life in vain anxiety. What is to be done for such a folly? (PP.227-228-229)

## (34) It Removes Obstacles and Ensures Success.

For the fulfilment of all our desires. constant meditation on the Name Divine is absolutely necessary. If we meditate on the Name with firm faith and devotion thrice a day, as instructed by the *Sadguru*, our mind would be free from all kinds of doubts. "Meditation on the Name of *Hari* (*God*) would drive away the obstacles in all directions."If the disciple constantly remembers his *Sadguru*. he will always feel and

experience the presence of his Master near him. It is the assurance of the Lord that if the devotee constantly calls upon him, He would remove the obstacles of His devotee. (P. 99-100)

If the Name granted by the *Sadguru* is meditated upon with faith and conviction,by fixing the gaze on the tip of the nose our work will automatically be crowned with success, without any hindrance. As is the intensity of your devotion, so is the gr ace of the Lord. God's help depends upon your devotion. Constant remembrance will confer delight. (P. 169)

## (35) It Enables the Seeker to Transcend Pairs of opposites.

The Pairs of opposites namely *Māyā* and *Brahma*, Duality and Non-duality, Worldly life and Spiritual life, Knowledge and Ignorance, With Form and Without Form, Master and Disciple-all these contribute to stimulate thought and enable man to attain Self-knowledge. And through the grace of the *Sadguru* when he attains it, both his awareness and non-awareness disappear and he transcends the pairs of opposites. "A critic should ever be our neighbour as he would always expose our merit and demerit." When a critic points out our merits and demerits we would consider them and reflect about them more and more. We would then fully understand their essential nature. And we would be able to transcend both worldly life and spiritual life and attain liberation even in this very life.

For the present we are living among these pairs of opposites. But when we are firmly convinced that these opposites, the products of *Māyā*, together with love, greed, compassion and forgiveness,are one and indivisible(*in essence*), we would realise their essential nature. Then both these aspects of *Māyā* would become identical and our likes and dislikes about them would vanish. But for realising this identity, meditation on the Name Divine is absolutely necessary. It must be immensely developed. In the worldly life none

becomes wealthy or learned all at once. Likewise none can attain Self-knowledge instantaneousiy. Everything depends upon continuity of practice which should increase the number of Names repeated. Moreover, this practice should be carried on sincerely-wholeheartedly. Then alone would Self-knowledge flash upon us. Even after this attainment, we are required to continue our worldly life. None can abandon it. In the same way we are to lead our spiritual life-continue our meditation on the Name Divine. Hence we should love both these aspects of our life, perform our *Sādhana* with all sincerity and maintain Self-knowledge.We should be firmly established in it.Then alone will real secret of spiritual life be realised.(PP.286-287)

## (B) Spiritual Welfare

### (36) Miracles are not Marks of Self-realisation

The Lord incarnated on the earth in the form of '*Digaṁbar*'(Sky-clad): Saints live in the world like '*Piśācās*'(Ghosts). "*Digaṁbar*" means either "non-attached" or "naked". And "*Pisāca*" means either "desireless" or "mad". The former meaning is spiritual while the latter is worldly. Persons wishing to parade like Saints become *Digaṁbar* or behave like Ghosts in the worldly sense of the term. Still, worldly persons consider their behaviour to be real and fully trust these hypocrites-pseudo-saints. Likewise. there are some persons who predict the past and the future and perform various miracles. They put on various types of dress and display a variety of tricks. Such hypocrites also are trusted implicitly and their behaviour is liked and approved by these worldly persons. It is but natural for the transient body to be attracted by these transient things. It easily trusts such a behaviour. as it is similar to its own. Our attitude generally partakes of our

nature. Hence a person with body-consciousness considers such hypocrites to be realised Saints and reveres them. But we, the *Sādhakas* who know the Eternal *Ātman*, will never admit and respect such non-eternal factors. We will not admit that these are great Saints. Like attracts like.A devotee likes devotion, a scholar likes knowledge. This is the truth.

Hence *Sri Nimbargi Mahārāj*, with great compassion, has emphatically declared: "Even though a person has brought the very Sun before you, has revealed the past and future to you, don't regard him as a realised Saint. Don't consider such fraudulent knowledge to be Self-knowledge." Place implicit trust in these words of *Sri Nimbargi Mahārāj*. The path of meditation on Name Divine, which has prevailed till now, by the grace of *Sri Mahārāj* is the only holy Path that can grant Self-knowledge. This is the genuine Path of Self-knowledge. Wa should adopt this Holy Path. But poor fellows! they don't care to know the nature of such a Holy Path. What should be done for this ignorance? (P.85)

## (37) A Pharisee can't be a Saint.

He is a real *Sanyāsi*-a renouncer-who has forgotten "I and Mine".He is a genuine realised Saint who has completely bid good bye to body-consciousness and constantly lives in Self-consciousness. Such a Self-consciousness requires a fiery earnestness and renunciation. This being the case, poor fellows, labouring under the delusion of body-consciousness, acquire intellectual knowledge and try to imitate the external behaviour of Saints, for being respected as Saints by all. They make a show of their Saint-hood. They profess that they have abandoned hearth and home, given up speech and adopted silence. They even boast of their Saint-hood and call themselves *Jnānis*. But their mind is not free from passion for sense-objects. Hence they very often fall a prey to the sudden upsurge of passion and anger, as they do not possess genuine

renunciation. How can such persons acqire the greatness of Saints? (P. 272)

## (38) God-realisation is alone Real Self-knowledge

*Saint Rāmadās* has defined Self-knowledge. Self-knowledge should not be tainted by miracles. We have been told up till now that *Sri Dattātreya* and other realised Saints have performed miracles. But it is the statement of the intellectuals. Realised Souls will never make such assertion.This is not spiritual Self-knowledge. But as persons are accustomed to treat miracle-mongering as the sign of Self-knowledge, this notion has taken deep root in their hearts. Hence they consider miracles as Self-knowledge. This. however, is a mistaken conception. The reality or otherwise of this notion cannot be understood except through the company of Saints.

## (39) Intellectual Knowledge and Spiritual Illumination.

The *Namaskāra-śatak* and other poems sent by you were very well appreciated by all. The intense love and devotion expressed by you in them, lent them immense delight which cannot be described in words But all this is the expression of worldly, intellectual knowledge. Just as you have derived delight from this knowledge, you should also enjoy Divine Spiritual Bliss, from the ineffable *Paramātman*, by practising intense meditation on the Name. Spiritual Illumination is thousand-times superior to intellectual knowledge. Its great superiority simply defies description. The realisation of the attribute-less *Paramâtman* frees a *Śâdhaka* from desires and duties He then spreads the glory of devotion among the people and confers obligation upon them. Thus does he become famous, and leads a blissfuf life.

Hence, to qualify yourself for developing such dissociation you should carry on your meditation on the Divine Name

with proper zeal and steadfastness. *Śri Sadguru* has earnestly rsquested you to do this without fail. You have achieved eminence by conducting your worldly duties in an excellent manner which is really commendable. Likewise, we hope that you would devote yourself ardently to meditation and fully qualify yourself to attain the ineffable Self-knowledge-Self-realisation.(P. 161)

## (4o) Self-realisation alone is Real *Swadharma*.

*Swadharma* or one's own Duty-is two-fold: Worldly Duty and Spiritual Duty. Body is after all non-eternal. A person regards the duties pertaining to such body-duties like charity, pilgrimage etc. performed for enhancing its greatness-to be real *Swadharma*. Since he firmly hugs the delusion that he is eternal, he considers worldly duties alone as *Swadharma*. In fact, as described in the verse below the whole world is the product of Illusion:

> I am an Illusion; you are an Illusion.
> All devotees and even Godhead is an Illusion.
> The world itself is the product of Illusion.

Hence all ths duties in this worldly life are illusory. They will never be real, will never become *Swadharma*. To realise one's Self through meditation on Divine Name is the only Spiritual *Swadharma*. "To reside in the Self is the *Swadharma*-the Duty of all duties".. This is the assertion of *Sri Rāmdās*. This is the Truth.

The *Pandavās* obeyed *Sri Krishna* and lead a truthful life. Hence they commanded high regard and attained great renown. The great works written about them have provided guidance to several persons and have proved a blessing to them in many ways. All this is the outcome of their truthfulness, their practice of *Swadharma*. Still, when once under the influence of worldly emotion, they were attracted by sense-objects which deluded them and tempted them to utter, "*Naro vā kuñjaro* vā"-"Man or Elephant"—it brought about blemish

to their character. So worldly duty should not be considered as real. Passion for sense-objects leaves a relish for them in the heart. Such a relish brought a stigma even to such great souls like *Nārad*, *Brahma* and *Indra* etc. None is able to detect this hidden urge in the heart which impels persons to commit sinful acts. Still as they had formerly practised real *Swadharma*, they are being regarded as great Godly Souls.(P. 29)

## (41) Self-realisation itself is Supreme Liberation.

Both worldly and spiritual ways of life are the products of the grace of *Sadguru*. They are guided and goaded by the will of the Lord. Not a blade of grass moves but by his will. This being the case, it is not proper to be absorbed in the maintenance of one's own profession alone and forget one's spiritual pursuits. Therefore if we carry on our meditation on Divine Name with regular steadfastness as enjoined by our *Sadguru*, we would be able to discharge both the duties properly. This is real *Dharma*. But people consider worldly duties such as Charity, Sacrifice etc. alone as their duties and begin to perform them.Thereby they would acquire some merit, no doubt. But Time eagerly lies in wait for their destruction. Such a *Dharma* forges bonds of *Karma* for them and makes them suffer from pain and sorrow. Hence "Attainment of Self-realisation is the most supreme of all Duties." But unfortunately poor fellows! they don't care for it. Because, it has become a longstanding tradition with them to consider worldly duties to be *Swadharma*. This has taken deep root in their hearts. So they refuse to believe is the spiritual truth viz. "Seff-realisation is the supreme *Swadharma*". This should not be the case. Really Self-realisation is the highest *Swadharma*. (PP. 74-75)

## (42) Body-consciousness should be Transformed into God-consciousness.

Every *Jiva* (soul) comes from *Śiva* (God) and returns to

God . But during its sojourn on earth,under the spell of sense-objects it forgets its Divine Source, considers itself as *Jiva* and begins to lead its worldly life. Its delusion does not allow it to identify either with worldly or with spiritual life. Its enhanced ego makes him one-sided and deprives him of the enjoyment of any kind of happiness. Really the soul has no independent existence either in the worldly or in the spiritual life. God alone exists in the real sense of the term. Both the ways of life belong to Him. Hence mere remembrance of God is the only duty of the soul. If this conviction is firmly rooted in it, the soul would be able to enjoy happiness and satisfaction. Therefore, one should practise meditation with firm faith and regularity, until the conviction of its identity with God strikes root in the soul. He would then realise his oneness with God and enjoy all-round happiness and bliss in both worldly and spiritual life.....

## (43) Identification of Jiva and Siva is the End of Human Life.

The merit attained by the practice of penance in former life enables a person fo get human life in which he becomes worthy to pursue spiritual life Now if he leads his worldly and spiritual life by retaining the consciousness of his past meditation, he would develop an attitude of an unattached witness and non-doer. He would also attain Godhead. His former merit granted him human body. And as he carries on the same meditation he attains Godhead itself. As the *Kannada* adage goes : "*Aṣṭakke iṣṭu. iṣṭakke eṣṭu*?"— "If that (merit) has granted this happiness, how much more bliss would this superior merit grant?" (PP.59-60)

If a person realises that God is Impersonal, he will be completely free from Soul-consciouness-free from the consciousness that he is a devotee. He becomes Impersonal and Formless. He is ever immersed in God-consciousness. Hence he becomes a non-doer in both spheres of life. He is a real devotee who experiences such a transformation. He is a real Liberated Soul. This is the final Liberation through Oneness. And this is the supreme End of Life.

# SRI AMBURAO MAHARAJ

*Born : Jigjeewani*
*1856*

*Samadhi : Inchageri*
*22-12-1933*

# SRI AMBURAO MAHARAJ

1856 - 1933

## BRIEF LIFE - SKETCH

*R. P. Kulkarni and K. D. Sangoram*

### Prelude

Sri Amburao Maharaj alias Sri Baba was a premier disciple of Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj of Umadi, as well as a senior spiritual brother of Sri Gurudev Ranade. He has been aptly described as "faith incarnate", " penance resplendent", as well as "a flute singing the spiritual glory of his Master." Sri Baba's life is afine illustration of how a genuine *Sadguru* like Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj realises at first sight the potential spiritual greatness of his prospective disciple like Sri Baba, pursues him, initiates him against his will and finally raises him to the status of a *Sadguru*. Let us see how Sri Baba, through the grace of Sri Maharaj, evolved himself into this exalted position and blessed thousands of aspirants in course of time. Let us also have a glimpse at his spiritual teaching.

## Birth and early life

Sri Amburao Maharaj was born in 1856 in a poor yet pious and devout family at Jigjeewani, a village in Indi Tahasil of Bijapur District. Nothing uncommon or miraculous happened at the time of his birth. He spent his childhood in the company of his village companions playing in the dusty streets. Being born in a Kulkarni family, Baba was expected to have some elementary education expected then of a Kulkarni (Village Accountant). As there was no facility for schooling in that village, he was sent to Nimbargi to stay at his uncle Bapurao, an ardent disciple of the great Saint Sri Nimbargi Maharaj, for schooling. While going to school, he used to have *Darshan* of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj, the founder of the *Sampradāya* to which Baba belonged. At that time Baba used to bow down to the Saint, who then cast his penetrating glance at him and gave his blessings and sugar as *Prasād*. On completion of his primary education, he returned home to face the odds of life.

Baba lost his parents-Shriniwasrao and Radhabai-in his early age and was left to the care and protection of his elder brother, Gopalrao. When he was barely twenty, he was required to face severe trials and tribulations of life-an ordeal which none of an ordinary courage could face. A very severe drought overtook the whole of Bijapur District. A man of iron will and undaunted courage, Baba decided to face the famine bravely. He left his native village with his younger brother Krishnappa, in search of food and shelter. Young Baba along with his younger brother reached the Shankaracharya Math at Sankeshwar with great distressful suffering on the way. In the Math Baba, who looked strong and stout, was allotted the work of fetching water from the river and his brother was given some light menial work. Baba by nature, was endowed with high moral qualities. By his honesty and sincerity he secured the sympathies of the *Swāmiji* of the Math, who used to address him as "Jagajejecvana"-"Life of the World". When the drought condition receded,

and the normal condition was restored, Baba with his brother returned home. But very soon he had to share the heavy responsibility of maintaining the entire family along with his elder brother. He therefore joined service in famine relief works on daily wages af two annas only.He was required to work in scorching heat of the sun from dawn to dusk every day. But even that service also was soon terminated as that Department stopped its work.

## Brief Respite and Despondency

Thereafter, Baba left Jigjeewani and stayed at Inchageri in order to manage the family affairs of his widowed sister, Jiwubai and her minor son Annappa. There he worked as an officiating Kulkarni of Inchageri,representing his minor nephew, Annappa. By his honest and sincere work as a Kulkarni he secured the sympathies of the entire village public there. In due course of time Baba was married to Ahalyabai and felt quite happy in his family life. He got a female child to Ahalyabai, but it was not destined to live long. Fortune did not favour him. Jealous God did not allow him to love his wife and daughter for a long time. He snatched away from him his wife and daughter, one after another. Thus Baba was left alone and his hopes and aspirations of a happy family life toppled down like a house of cards. The untimely separation of the life-partner in such a youthful age told much upon Baba's mind.He looked extremely disappointed and dejected.

## Prophetic Indication

His sister was much worried to see him always gloomy. Somehow, she came to know that some of Baba's friends had planned to visit Ganagapur,a holy place of Lord Sri Dattatraya, for the annual *Dattajayanti* festival. With a view to divert Baba's mind she told him to go to Ganagapur with his friends.

so that he might find some relief to his ailing mind. Accordingly Baba accompanied his friends to Ganagapur. He had heard that prophetic directions for solution of difficulties are given there by Sri Dattatraya, if "*Gurucharitra*" is regularly read and finished as prescribed in that Sacred Book. Baba, accordingly, completed the reading (*Pārāyana*) of the "*Gurucharitra*" as prescribed, within three days. But to his great disappointment he did not have any direction or indication about his second marriage which he had kept in mind. On the contrary, a *Sanyāsi* appeared in his dream on the third day, handed over to him a rosary of beads and disappeared. In spite of this prophetic indication of meditation on Divine Name received from a *Sadguru*, Baba was sorely disappointed for want of any indication regarding a happy family life. Hence, he returned to Inchageri in a despondent mood.

## Sudden Conversion

Jiwubai was much more worried to see her brother in a worse condition. In a few months time, however, the "*Hanuman Jayanti*" festival, known in that part as "Sri *Bhimarayā's*" festival, started at Nimbargi as usual. On that occasion the devotees are usually served with sweet *prasād* at meals in the temple. Hence she told Baba: "There is now *Bhimarāyā's* festival at Nimbargi. Go there, pray for *Sri Bhimarāyā's* grace and receive a full meal of sweet *Prasād* there. That will lessen your mental despondency". Baba agreed to do so.

Accordingly, Baba took his bath early in the morning, started for Nimbargi on foot and reached there about an hour before noon. As he was approaching the temple, he saw a gentleman sitting on a square platform in front of the temple, chewing betel-leaves and tobacco and conversing with some people sitting on the ground near him. As Baba also was in the habit of chewing betel-leaves and tobacco, he approached the gentleman and requested him to give them to him. There

were also some among them who were acquainted with Baba. One of them apparently introducing him said: " Maharaj, he is Amburaya Kulkarni of Inchageri". Sri Maharaj intently looked at him, as if he was expecting the arrival of his prospective chosen disciple, asked him to sit down and offered him betel leaves and tobacco. From the talk of the people there, Baba also came to know that the gentleman was none else but Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj. Thereupon Sri Maharaj cast a penetrating glance at Baba and lovingly asked him: " Well ! Amburaya, you seem to be greatly worried and gloomy ! Will you tell me what ails you so much?" This affectionate enquiry brought tears in his innocent eyes. He readily poured his agony before Sri Maharaj, related all the painful incidents and humbly sought his guidance. Sri Maharaj listened to his tale of sorrow with warm sympathy and said,"You have already received due instructions from Lord Dattatraya.Why don't you follow them?"Baba had not yet disclosed this fact there.He was,therefore, surprised at the supernatural powers of Sri Maharaj and with increased reverence he said: "Yes ! Maharaj.I have been blessed with a *Drishtânta* (दृष्टांत) at Ganagapur which indicated that I should meditate on Divine Name received from a *Sadguru*.But then how could it remove my sorrow !" "Infinite is the power of *Nâma*, " asserted Sri Maharaj. "What could it not do? If you devoutly meditate on it and observe the vow of not touching others' wealth and woman, it would invite the blessing of the Lord, who would grant you His vision and bliss. Would it not drive away all your sorrow?" This emphatic assertion reduced his tension and brought about a sort of consolation to him. Observing this change in him, Sri Maharaj further said: "I may grant you the Divine *Nâma* if you want". Just then, there was an announcement that *Prasâd* was ready and will be served to the devotees in the temple. Sri Maharaj then said to Baba: "Since you seem to be hungry, take *Prasâd* now, calmly think over the matter and then come to me. I shall be waiting for you here." Baba agreed to do so.

But as soon as he left for the temple, he was assailed by various kinds of doubts. They started to undermine his favourable reactions about the advice of Sri Maharaj. He thought: "If I marry and lead a family life, I will not be able to devote myself fully to meditation on *Nāma*; and if I abstain from marriage and devote myself to meditation, it might not be possible for me to observe the vows strictly. Marriage or *Nāma*? What to choose? What to do?". These were the thoughts that were oscillating in his mind even while taking the *Prasād*. But ultimately, temptation for married life became irresistiable and he decided not to receive *Nāma*. He also decided not to approach Sri Maharaj while returning, lest he might be again persuaded to receive *Nāma*.

Sri Maharaj, however, was sitting on the platform, waiting for Baba. But Baba rapidly passed by him, without even looking at him. Sri Maharaj observed this. He asked his disciples to stop him and bring him to him. Sri Maharaj then asked him: " Why did you try to run away from me ? You had agreed to come to me after *Prasād*. Is it not so, Amburaya?" Full of remorse, Baba tried to explain: "Maharaj, I am sorry.I felt that I would not be able to observe the vows strictly and hence, I dropped the idea of receiving the *Nāma*." " Is that so ?" asked Sri Maharaj and then said firmly, "Don't you worry ! I will take the full responsibility of your observance of the vows. Will you now agree to receive *Nāma* and be free from your present sorrowful condition ?" Unable to resist this pressing assurance of Sri Maharaj, Baba finally agreed. Sri Maharaj, then, showered his grace on him, initiated him through the medium of his spiritual brother, Bhaurao of Savalsang and said: " Amburaya, now go on with meditation on this *Nāma* ".

## Intense *Sādhana* and Illumination

The Divine Name granted to Sri Baba brought about a sudden and great mental transformation in him. Sri Maharaj's words, " Now go on with the meditation on this

Name, " were all the while ringing in his ears. With the *Nāma* in his breath and his eyes fixed at the tip of his nose, he left Nimbargi for Inchageri. He came to Nimbargi to have the taste of sweet material *Prasād* but returned with the nectarlike spiritual *Prasād* viz., "*Nāmāmrita.*" He continued this meditation without a break throughout the journey till he reached Inchageri.

Jiwubai now saw Baba entirely a changed man. He showed no interest in his outside activities. He liked to avoid company and live in solitude.He was engaged in meditation for three months in spite of severe eye-sore, by which he was troubled thrice during this period. But he did not swerve even an inch from following strictly the instructions of his *Sadguru*, Sri Maharaj. Seeing all this, Jiwubai thought that Baba had lost his balance of mind and that he was getting mad. While referring to this state of things, Baba later on used to tell that he was not then mad after marriage but was certainly mad after *Nāma*.

During these three months Baba had spiritual experiences of a very high order. 'Floods of spiritual lights' enveloped him on all sides and he could not visualise anything else in the external world.As he was not aware of such spiritual experiences before, he was bewildered and could not understand what it was.To continue meditation in such a condition would be, in his opinion, inviting complete loss of his eyesight; and to give it up would amount to disobedience of the instructions given by *Sadguru*, which, he thought, was more harmful than tha loss of eyesight. He thus happened to be in a fix.

## Verification of Experience

Fortunately, one day Baba heard the news that Sri Maharaj had been at Savalsang, a village quite near Inchageri. Baba took this opportunity and immediately went there with

a view to seek a solution to this vital problem. He humbly lay prostrate at the feet of Sri Maharaj and stood before him in a dejected mood. "What is the matter with you ?Amburaya, why this dejection now?" enquired Sri Maharaj. Baba, thereupon, explained the whole situation and expressed his fear at the possible loss of his eyesight. Sri Maharaj listened to him attentively and smiled. In fact, he was overjoyed at heart. Expressing his admiration, he told his disciples there, " Look here : What a brilliant experience this young man has attained within such a short time ! " He then asked one of his disciples to sing a song containing spiritual experiences. Incidentally, that song described the spiritual experiences of "Floods of Light". Sri Maharaj specifically pointed out to Baba, that the Floods of Light, which he experienced, was a spiritual experience of God and assured him: "Believe me, it is God Himself !"Thrice he told this and thrice he asked Baba to believe in his words.From that moment Baba implicitly believed in the words of Sri Maharaj and decided to continue his meditation without any fear or anxiety. At the time of his departure, however, Sri Maharaj gave him this specific advice. "Henceforth, you need not meditate continuously throughout the day. You should practise the prescribed meditation for nine hours every day; at other times you should only try to remember *Nâma*. As per this advice of Sri Maharaj, Baba since then practised the prescribed meditation for nine hours every day without fail.

## Dialogue With *Sadguru*:

Baba, as a popular Kulkarni, had made many friends at Inchageri. But now he was entirely a changed man. As his mind was turned Godward, he did not like to have any disturbance in his daily nine hours' meditation. In order to avoid the company of friends, he started to go out for meditation in the hilly track round about Inchageri. He used to go out early in the morning, sit for meditation in a vally for six

hours and return home after 12 noon. In the evening he practised meditation for three hours in his own room at Inchageri. Thus he continued his daily nine hours meditation for a number of years thereafter.

As Baba progressed in his meditation and consequently in his spiritual experiences as well, he felt a keen aspiration for the company of his *Sadguru*. He accordingly expressed his desire, before Maharaj, to stay with him. But as the circumstances were not yet favourable, Sri Maharaj did not allow him to do so. But he told Baba that on every Saturday he was going to Nimbargi for the *Darshan* of the *Samādhi* of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj and that he should go over there the same day, so that both would be meeting each other once in a week. Accordingly, Baba visited Nimbargi every Saturday, meditated in the holy company of Sri Maharaj, and got his difficulties solved, until Sri Maharaj established his *Math* (मठ) at Inchageri in 1903. He also used to attend the "*Shrāvan Saptāh*" arranged by Sri Maharaj in his own house at Umadi and take the advantage of meditating in the holy company of Sri Maharaj and other *Sādhakās*, continuously for nine hours without a break every day.

As Baba progressed in meditation and spiritual experiences, his innate keen intellect got a great stimulus. On account of introspection, doubts began to crop up in his mind and naturally he tried to get them clarified by Sri Maharaj. One day Sri Maharaj in the course of his discourse on *Dāsa-Bodha* told that Sri Nimbargi Maharaj brought the Divine *Nāma* from "*Swarga*" (Heaven) and hence he had got the authority to impart it to others. Innocent and open-hearted as Baba was, he frankly asked "Maharaj, you just told me how Sri Nimbargi Maharaj got the authority to initiate others. Please let me know whence have you brought the *Nāma* and who gave you the authority to impart it to others". As it was then time for meditation, Maharaj, without giving any reply,

went to his room and Baba also went to the terrace of Bhimaraya temple for meditation.

## Warning and Self-Surrender:

In course of meditation, Baba had a vision of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj and heard his following words: "Oh, you Baba, why have you let loose your tongue ? You have no business to question the authority of Bhauraya (Sri Maharaj). I have given him the authority to initiate. Shut up ! Simply mind your meditation". Baba shuddered to see the vision of the wrathful figure of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj and to hear his threatening words. Overwhelmed with intense repentance, he straightway went to Sri Maharaj, lay prostrate at his feet, stood trembling before him and with tears in his eyes implored Sri Maharaj to pardon him. "Don't you worry," said Sri Maharaj. "I hope you are convinced now".Baba again prostrated at his his feet with his heart full of awe and gratitude. From that day onwards, Baba stopped asking questions. surrendered himself completely to Sri Maharaj and regarded him as a living embodiment of God Himself. Since then, word of Sri Maharaj was law to Baba.

Now, Baba had ceased to take any interest in worldly affairs. His interest and attraction centred round Sri Maharaj, *Nāma* and meditation only. Sri Maharaj was all in all to him. He had practically merged his individuality in Maharaj. This sentiment has been clearly expressed by him in the following extract of his letter to Sri Maharaj:-"I have heretofore spontaneously expressed that I have completely dedicated myself to *Sadguru* Maharaj and consequently a firm conviction has been rooted in my mind that Sri *Sadguru* Maharaj is always taking care of myself. Whatever I write in letters, that is the wish of *Sadguru* Maharaj,inspired by him in me and expressed only through me. Whatever I speak or do,it is His wish and inspiration. There is nothing as mine in them, separately". He had thus reached the acme of Self-Surrender.

## Dedicated service to the Math (मठ)

On account of some adverse circumstances Sri Maharaj was required to shift his centre of activity from Nimbargi to Inchageri-the place of his Sudama-his chosen disciple-Baba. Sri Maharaj established his *math* (मठ) there and Baba was entrusted with the work of management of the *Math*, as if like a *Mathādhikāri*. He played a supremely important role in the growth and glory of the *Math*. His untiring, dedicated and sincere labour in this rsspect to the entire satisfaction of Sri Maharaj, elicited the following appreciation from him: "Your service has immensely gladdened my heart. Now, my heart's desires have been completely fulfilled."

## Role as a *Sadguru*

After the demise of Sri Maharaj in 1914, Sri Baba was not prepared to initiate fresh aspirants even though Sri Maharaj had given him permission to initiate, as he had then the Super-sensuous experience of audition of the Divine *Nāma*. But he very well knew that initiation was one of the most responsible duties of a *Sadguru*. His reluctance in this respect at that time appears to be due to his keen desire to get a fresh definite mandate from Sri Maharaj in his Spiritual Form. This desire was also soon fulfilled, when Sri Maharaj appeared in his vision (*Dristānt*) and told him that permission was granted to him to continue his mission of initiation and spread of the gospel of God-devotion. But Baba was a shrewd and talented disciple of Sri Maharaj. He was not satisfied merely with this sort of simple permission. He wanted a fresh assurance from Sri Maharaj. Realising this, Sri Maharaj again appeared in his vision (*Drishtānt*) and told him: "Rest assured! Your words are my words. Begin initiation." On account of this unequivocal assurance from Sri Maharaj, Baba finally decided and began to initiate aspirants, since the *Dattajayanti Saptāh* in 1915. Nevertheless, he always felt and told his disciples, that *Nāma*

granted by him is the one received by him from Sri Maharaj Hence Sri Maharaj himself was their *Sadguru* and not he.

With this attitude of absolute self- surrender, Sri Baba continued the holy mission of Sri Maharaj. He unfurled the banner of God-devotion, proclaimed at the top of his voice the greatness and glory of Sri Maharaj in different places throughout Maharashtra and Karnataka, and attracted even a large number of educated disciples to spiritual life. as preached by Sri Maharaj. Thus he continued the holy mission of Sri Maharaj with untiring zeal for about 19 years after the passing away of Sri Maharaj. Hence, he could have to his credit about five thousand dsiciples. He left his mortal coil on 22-12-1933 in the same manner as his *Sadguru* had done. From God he was taken and to God he went.

## Splendid Spiritual Experiences

Generally, saints do not relate all their spiritual experiences to others. Sri Baba was not an exception to this tradition. He has however, related only a few for the encouragement and edification of his disciples who have recorded them. We should like to share some of them with the readers.

We have already seen how within three months after his initiation, Sri Baba had the vision of " Floods of Spiritual Light ", that enveloped him on all sides. As his spiritual *Sādhana* progressed he had splendid spiritual experiences, rich both in variety and grandeur. He had the vision of flashes of lightening and of various brilliant colours. The Spiritual Sum and the Moon were visible to him even in the pitchy darkness of the night. He had enjoyed the delight of listening to the absorbing symphonies of '*Anāhat Nāda*' and also heard the enchanting sweet music of a Divine flute—probably played by Sri Gopal Krishna- in his vision. At that time, he

asked one of his disciples to sing the following song often and often on that day: " नको वाजवू श्रीहरि मुरली " ( pray Sri Hari, stop playing on the flute ). He used to hear Divine Names and could easily comprehend the Names granted to other seekers by their spiritual teachers. One day he heard a few poetic lines which he recorded on a slip of paper and showed it to Sri Maharaj, who though glad at heart to know this experience of Baba, tore off that paper and prohibited him from recording in writing any such spiritual experiences He also tasted the spiritual ambrosia, which infused a great spiritual energy in him.

Sri Baba said that during his meditation at night he saw figures of saints and sages, Gods and Goddesses, passing before his vision like pictures in a cinema show. He had also enjoyed the vision of " *Vaikuntha* ", as described by kanak-das in his song which contains brilliant description of cumulative spiritual experiences. Here is that description of *Vaikuntha*, as visualised by saint Kanakdas. "*Vaikuntha* " he says. "was wonderfully beautiful on account of beautiful gardens,great overflowing lakes and imposing majestic palaces with golden turrets. I saw the refulgent main door of the palace and inside it the beams of diamonds set in jewels of different kinds and the houses of the best gods, and last of all "God Rangashai" who is the destroyer of the wicked. I saw in the palace of God, the nymphs Rambha and Urvasi, sages Tumbara and Narada and the main gods. I saw the form of Vishnu who uses the Serpent as his bed and Siva, who uses it as his ornament round the neck. I saw there also a large assembly of devotees." This delightful vision of *Vaikuntha* threw Sri Baba into ecstasy and in that blissful superconscious state, we are told, he was actually, dancing. Once while explaining the meaning of " *Anubhava* " (अनुभव), Sri. Baba told his disciples: " When you have the vision of the Spiritual World exactly resembling this material world, it is

called "*Anubhava*." But mind; this material world is merely a faint replica of the original Spiritual World. "

Finally. Sri Baba reached the acme of God-realisation and had the full-fledged vision (दर्शन) of the *Ātman* every where. Not only this, he had the experience of touch (स्पर्शन) and also conversation (संभाषण) with the *Ātman*. He could thus enjoy supreme bliss and peace from such superb visions, culminating in perfect unison with the *Ātman*.

## Eminent Personality

Sri Baba, as we have seen, had enjoyed splendid spiritual experiences culminating in the unison and bliss of the *Ātman*. He had thus become a liberated Soul (जीवन्मुक्त) The liberation had brought about all-round development of all his faculties, granting him a personality all his own. His original keen intellect had become keener still. It could solve all the difficulties of his disciples in no time. He could even satisfactorily solve the difficulties in the *Upanishads* of one of his scholar-disciples who afterwarde told his friends that " it was an intellectual treat." Once he was asked: "which is superior-Fate or Effort?" He at once remarked, neither Fate nor Effort is superior It is God who is superior to both." On another occasion a disciple asked: "Baba, what is meant by *Samâdhi*?" He at once replied, "when you have the full-fledged vision of your *Ātman* exactly as you are, that state is called *Samādhi*'. In this way he could answer all such questions to the entire satisfaction of his disciples. Moral virtues in him had also attained similar perfection. He literally refused to touch the wealth of others He did not receive a gift of a woolen coat (Bandi) even from Maharaj himself, without paying its price. He avoided to sit for meditation in the room in which his spiritual sister Sivalingava was meditating. His anger, though sudden and strong at times, was as short-lived as a

line drawn on a sheet of water. He never knew any jealousy even about the spiritual attainments of anybody. On the contrary, he was actually over-joyed to know the unique experience of supersensuous audition of 'Divine Names' by Sri Gurudev Ranade and even asked him to begin to initiate the seekers. Sri Baba had possessed an unshakable faith and tremendous will-power,which enabled him to face and bear the severe buffets of life to,carry on rigourous *Sādhana*,both moral and spiritual,as well as to render the strenuous selfless service to his *Sadguru* Sri Maharaj. His firm faith and strong will also played dominant role in the complete surrender of his ego and thereby merging his own individuality in that of Sri Maharaj. Likewise, the emotions of Sri Baba were also perfectly purified and ennobled. He entertained unbounded love for his disciples. It was so intense that even at the time of his departure, he could express his great anxiety for the spiritual welfare of his erring disciples. His all-absorbing devotion to Sri Maharaj was simply exemplary. During the lifetime of Sri Maharaj, his word was law to Baba. Never was it transgressed by him. Even after the departure of Sri Maharaj, he always used to consult Sri Maharaj spiritually for the Divine *Nāma* before imparting the same to a seeker. In all humility he used to say: " The *Nāma* belongs to Sri Maharaj. Sri Maharaj is your Guru. I am merely his conveyer."

After the passing away of Sri Baba, Gurudev Ranade has written a circular letter of condolence through Sri Kaka-saheb Karkhanis to all the disciples of Sri Baba, describing Sri Baba's supreme spiritual greatness both in life and death. We are giving here the relevant extract from that letter, as follows:

" ... ... Sri Baba was the greatest asset to us after the passing away of Maharaj in January 1914. Nearly 20 years after the Maharaj's passing away, Sri Baba helped all the disciples of Maharaj by his constant guidance and inspiration. For a considerable period he refrained from imparting initiation

to new seekers.But when he found after these years that it was absolutely necessary for him to carry on the torch of spiritual life, inherited from the Maharaj, he girded up his loins, and conferred spiritual obligation upon numerous people. You will grant that Baba had a greater number of educated disciples than even Maharaj had. There was a great identity of interest and life between Maharaj and Baba, and when Baba was left over to us, it was as if we were seeing and hearing Maharaj. His method of discoursing on the *Dasa-Bodha* was absolutely similar to that of Maharaj himself. There was also no man after Maharaj who carried on so intently the "*Trikâl Sâdhana*," which Maharaj spent a life-time in preaching at the top of his voice. It is very significant as you pointed out in your last letter, that when Sri Ganapatrao Tulpule had been to Bijapur to see him, Baba exclaimed in the midst of number of persons who had assembled round about him, that the only two poles around which a spiritual man's life should revolve are (1) meditation on the one hand and (2) morality on the other. This was the very advice, which was being imparted to all of us by Maharaj himself. It has a peculiar significance as coming from Baba even in his last moments.

Your very realistic description of the way in which he left his body is quite significant to show how a spiritual person like him, who has attained to such uncommon heights, dies in the midst of God-communion. From God he is taken and to God he goes. As with Maharaj so with Baba, their life and death have been sublime illustrations of a perpetual communion ..... You will kindly console all the disciples of Baba with the advice which Sri Baba himself imparted to us 20 years ago. that even a Guru may seem to have departed, he still remains at the back of all his disciples to protect them and to further their spiritual endeavours.....".

Such was the unique example of an exalted personality left behind him by Sri Baba for his disciples to emulate.

# Practical Philosophy

*(M. S. Deshpande & K. D. Sangoram)*

## Prelude :

Let us now ascertain a few salient features of Sri Baba's Practical Philosophy - his practical, ethical and spiritual teaching. Sri Baba had inherited the spiritual tradition of Sri Sankar, Sri Jnāneśvara, Sri Nimbargi Maharaj and Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj. Hence his teaching had been naturally based upon their metaphysics, ethics and mysticism. His ideas about God, Soul, and World, about the importance of ethical and spiritual life, about *Sadguru*, *Nāma* and meditation, as well as about Self-surrender, Spiritual Experience and Liberation, were almost similar to those of the great Saints, both ancient and modern. Only he had his own way of expressing them, due to the peculiar environment in which he lived and moved.

## Practical Teaching:

Sri Baba's teaching, like that of his Master, was more

practical than theoretical. He was not so much concerned with the theoretical investigation and elucidation of why, when and how, the inanimate and animate creation came into existence. He was specially interested in the liberation of human beings, from the meshes of flesh - from delusive attraction of the worldly sensual pleasures. So he tried to bring home to them the supreme value of spiritual life and the realisation of God's vision and bliss. Moreover, his teaching was mainly based on his personal experience, both ethical and spiritual-both as a seeker as well as a Saint. He practised what he preached; he realised what he released for the benefit and guidance of his disciples. Thus his teaching had the firm backing of actual experience. Like Swami Ramdas " he expressed what he experienced" (*Âdhī kele. maga sāngitale*) आधीं केलें, मग सांगितलें.

## Metaphysics-Intellectual Discipline :

Once a disciple asked Sri Baba : " What is your philosophy-Dualism (*dvaita*) or Monism (advaita)?" Baba replied : " Ours is neither mere Dualism nor mere Monism. It is Dualistic Monism. (*dvitamaya advaita*). We believe in One Spiritual Reality—One God. He has two attributes—*Nāma* or Primeval Sound and *Rūpa* or Primeval Light. *Nāma* is *Rūpa* and *Rūpa* is *Nâma*. Tnere is no difference between them As stated by a modern Saint, *Nāma* is luminous Sound and *Rūpa* is sonorous Light. *Nâma* has many letters while *Rūpa* has several forms. Underlying these various letters and forms, we ealise One *Nāma* and One *Rūpa*. And finally we realise that both *Nāma* and *Rūpa* are attributes of One Realit /-One God. Thus we begin with Dualism and end in Monism." Such is the essence of his reply.

Sri Baba, like all other realised Saints, believed and maintained that there is One Supreme Spirit called the Absolute or *Parabrahman*. It is *Sat—Cit—Ânand* or Existence, Knowledge, Power and Bliss. This Infinite Spirit is primarily responsible for the creation, preservation and destruction of

the world of names and forms, that is full of animate and inanimate bodies and objects. This Spirit is present in the different bodies as individual Souls or *Jīvas* or *Jīvātmans* and in the universe as Universal Spirit or *Śiva* or *paramātman*. There is thus an identity between *Jīvātman* and *Paramātman*. The *Jīva* is the drop in the ocean of the Spirit or a spark of the Spiritual Fire.

This identity between the Soul and the Spirit has been expressed by Sri Baba in his own fashion: "*Āta—dehāta-mayā dharūn basalāya mhanūna to (ātmā) jīvātmā jhālāya* ( आत, देहात माया धरून बसलाय् म्हणून तो जीवात्मा झालाय. ) As he (*Ātman*) has resided in the body by being attracted by it, he has become *Jīvātmā*-individual Soul. *Tōca parat bahera ālā mhanaje paramātmā hoto*. (तोच परत बाहेर आला म्हणजे परमात्मा होतो.) —And if he comes out of the body (and mixes with the universe) he becomes *Paramātmā* or Universal Spirit.

About the nature of the world Sri Baba has suggestively stated in another context, in this way: While explaining the meaning of (*Pāramārthika*) *Anubhava*, he said: "*sṛṣṭige prati sṛsti āgabeku, adu anubhava*" (ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಗೆ ಪ್ರತಿ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿ ಆಗಬೇಕು, ಅದು ಅನುಭವ.) If we experience a Spiritual World exactly similar to this material world, that experience is called *Anubhava*. But this material world is a faint replica of the spiritual world. That is the Original, this is a copy; that is the substance, this is a shadow; that is eternal, this is evanescent".

It is generally believed that this world is an outcome of the *Māyā* of the Spirit or Lord. What is the nature of *Māyā*? To Sri Baba the word *Māyā* conveyed two conceptions: 1) *Māyā* is the ignorant attraction and attachment of the Soul for the body as well as its attachment, love and desire for worldly objects and the pleasure derived from them, ii) *Māya* also is the Supreme Mysterious Power of the Lord, of creation, preservation and destruction of the world. While *Māyā* controls and rules the Souls, the Lord controls and rules *Māyā*. Tho

first *Jiva-māyā* is the outcome of the original ignorance and delusion, while the second *Hari-māyā* is that of the original awareness and power.

The soul under the influence of ignorance and delusion identifies itself with the body, forgets its original nature of Bliss. It is enamoured of worldly pleasure, experiences the pleasure and pain of the body and allows itself to be whirled on the wheel of life and death. Sri Baba tries to awaken such souls from the life of flesh to the life of spirit.

## His Exhortation:

But how did he try to accomplish this task? Sri Baba once told a disciple: "Look here. We are mainly concerned with two types of persons : (i) Those who believe in God, want to realise Him and are prepared to perform the required experiment for it, and (ii) those who do not believe in God but are eager to know whether He exists or not and are ready to perform the requisite experiment for it. We have nothing to do with others."

Sri Baba, therefore, in his discourse always tried to exhort such aspirants almost in these words: "Please remember that human life is very valuable. You should not waste this precious gift in vain pursuit of the mirage of sensual pleasure which appears to be nectar at the start but proves to be a veritable poison in the end. Hence you should try to seek and realise the Lord and His eternal Bliss. For this alone has this blessed human life been granted to you by the Lord. So instead of falling an easy prey to the destructive allurement of the worldly grandeur and pleasure, like a moth attracted by the brilliance of a flame, you should try to practise moral and spiritual discipline enjoined by a *Sadguru* and enjoy the eternal spiritual Beatitude." Finally Sri Baba used to advise: "Just realise that you are not bodies. but are spirits. That's all. You would then have fulfilled the purpose of your life." *(Mi*

*dēha nave, ātmā āhe, evadhe karūn ghÿa mhanaje jhâle,*
(मी देह नव्हे, आत्मा आहे, एवढे करुन घ्या म्हणजे झाले).

## Ethics or Moral Discipline:

Now what was the nature of Sri Baba's moral discipline? What were the cardinal virtues he enjoined ? Sri Baba advocated first of all, the twin virtues of detachment from others' wealth and women, that are regarded as the minimum qualification of an aspirant in his *Sampradāya*. Every fresh aspirant was strictly required by Baba to take a solemn vow, not to touch others' wealth and women, This vow virtually used to bring about the control of *Kâma* as it includes the passionate desire both for lust and lucre. This *Kāma* happens to be the spring of all other vices. Hence the control of this arch enemy, would automatically lead to the control of other vices. At the same time, Sri Baba advised his disciples to avoid lethargy, worry and fear. Even though they are not considered as positive vices, still as they very often hinder our progress in *Sädhana*, a seeker is advised to be free from them.

Sri Baba did not consider the presence of evil thoughts as sinful, but regarded evil acts alone as sinful. The fickle mind is, he told, like a fly. Just as a fly sits on a flower and filth alike, the mind entertains both pure and impure thoughts. So a seeker should not unnecessarily be perturbed by its vagrant wanderings. He should, however, take particular care to see that his body does not follow it and commit sin.

Śri Baba also advised his disciples to cultivate the triple virtues of Compassion *(dayā)*. Forgiveness (*kṣamā*) and Equanimity — contentment (*sânti*). They should ever be filled with pity for the afflicted, with forgiveness for the sinners and try to preserve their balance of mind through contentment. Finally, the seekers were asked to develop devotion to God. It is this God-devotion that is the crown of all virtues. There is a reciprocal causation and development

between God-devotion and other virtues. They help each other in their development. All other virtues either spring from or culminate in Devotion.

When asked about the superiority of Effort (*prayatna*) and Fate (*prārabdha*), Sri Baba answered: "Neither Effort nor Fate is superior. It is God who is superior to both." When Sri Gurudev came to know this reply,he immensely appreciated it.

## Mysticism or Spiritual Discipline:

i) **Sadguru:** The spiritual *Sādhana* really begins from the proper initiation by a *Sadguru*.Now,who is a genuine *Sadguru*? According to Sri Baba, a *Sadguru* is one who has realised his identity with the *Ātman* - Lord-and who has heard the Divine *Nāma* (sound) and visualised the Divine *Rūpa* ( Light ) in his superconscious state, at the time of meditation. Such a realised *Sadguru* alone is capable of granting the Divine *Nâma* to his disciple. It is such *Nâma*, received from such a *Sadguru*, that can enable a seeker to gain spiritual experience through one-pointed meditation. Such is the spiritual teaching of Baba in this respect.

Sri Baba like other saints. maintained that a *Sadguru* should be regarded as God. He himself regarded his *Sadguru* as God and advised his disciples also to do so. His faith and regard for his Master, however, were not an outcome of mere intellectual conviction but were founded on the firm bed-rock of his actual experience. Like the All-merciful Lord, His *Sadguru* had protected him in difficulties, looked after his maintenance (*yoga kṣema*), guided him properly in his spiritual *Sādhana* and granted him splendid spiritual experiences and Bliss. How then can he think otherwise ? He thus entertained a living faith in the God-hood of his *Sadguru* and tried to impart the same faith to his disciples.

Whenever any disciple complained about the lack of progress in his spiritual experiences, Sri Babu used to remark : " I regard *Sri Mahāraj* as God. I enjoy spiritual experiences. You don't regard your *Sadguru* as God, so you are not blessed with good spiritual experiences. Try to regard him as God and then you will begin to have them. "

ii) **Nāma:** *Nāma* Divine is the centre of spiritua discipline in this *Sampradāya*. Meditation on Divine *Nāma* is the main *Sādhana* - nay it is the only *Sādhana* regarded in it as capble of granting spiritual experiences or the vision and Bliss Divine. *Nāma*, according to Sri Baba, is the essence of Divinity. " *Nāma, Nāma, Nāma Viṭhobā Nāma tujhē sāra.* "- " *Nama* is Thy essence, my Lord; *Nāma* is Thy essence." Sri Baba used to repeat this line of Śri Tukaram very often. *Nāma* is, as we have seen before, the luminous Sound of the Divine revealed to the intuitive ear and eye of a *Sadguru*. It is called *Akṣara - brahma* - Divinity in the form of Letters or Sounds, by Sri Baba. It does not signify any particular deity. It is a Divine Seed-*Sabija Nāma* - which, if watered by soulful meditation, is capable of supplying a harvest of spiritual experiences. Hence like Sri Maharaj, Sri Baba also used to advise his disciples " never to give up *Nāma* even though the heavens crash down upon their heads or the earth cleaves in twain beneath their feet. "

*Nāma*, according to Baba, is both a means as well as an end. As discipline it grants spiritual experiences. And as an end it grants Divine Bliss.

iii) **Meditation:** Meditation or *Nema* as it is called in this *Sampradāya*. (संप्रदाय) is of two types :(i) Rigorous or *Kattāca Nema* and (ii) Ordinary or *Sādhā Nema* (साधा नेम). i) Rigorous meditation consists in sitting in a quiet place, in a steady erect posture with the gaze fixed either on the tip or top of the nose, mentally repeating the *Nāma* along with incoming

and outgoing breath, with perfect devotion and concentration. Such a *Nema* should be regularly carried on, thrice a day, at least for one hour each time. ii) Ordinary meditation consists in simple remembrance of *Nāma* at all other times, even while walking and talking, eating and drinking etc, Sri Baba called this Meditation *Nirguna Bhakti*, devotion without attributes as he considered the *Nāma* as *Nirguṇa*.

Along with meditation Sri Baba advised his disciples to read regularly a fixed portion of *Pothi* or Sacred Books like *Dāsabōdha* and *Manōbōdha* of Sri Ramadas, thrice every day and perform *Bhajan* and *Arati*-sing the glory of the Lord and wave light before the Photograph of Sri Maharaj, with perfect devotion. Baba used to call this discipline *Saguna Bhakti* or Devotion with attribute. *Sagunācëni ādhāre nirguna pāvijë nirdhāre.* ( सगुणाचेनि आधारें निर्गुण पाविजे निर्धारे ). With the help and support of *Saguna Bhakti*, Baba used to say, you should carry on *Nirguṇa Bhakti* and realise the Lord who is also *Nirguṇa*.

Finally Baba emphasised the importance of *Satsang*-good company, in spiritual life. He always advised all to carry on their *Sādhana* in the holy company of the *Sādhakās*. Such a *Sādhana* becomes doubly effective.

Sri Baba was once asked : " How long is this *Sādhana* to be continued ? " He peremptorily replied : "Till the end of life. The *Ātman* is ever free. He does not require any *Sādhana*, which is meant for the body. Hence it should be performed till the body lasts. "

Whenever the *Sādhakās* complained about the disturbance caused by extraneous thoughts at the time of meditation, Sri Baba used to tell them : "These idle thoughts are the products of your stray desires. Reduce the desires and the thoughts would be automatically reduced. Thoughts gain

power through your active support to them. Make it a point not to support them. Be mere witnesses to their wanderings, go on with your meditation and they will vanish after some time. Secondly, repeat the *Nâma* rapidly one after another without leaving any interval between two *Nâmas*. Then there would be no chance for the thoughts to intervene. If you thus meditate on *Nâma* which is *Nirvikalpa* - without attributes, you will not be assailed by idle fancies. As *Swâmi Râmdâs* has put it : *Nirvikalpâsi kalpitâ kalapanâ mode tatvatâ*. (निर्विकल्पामी कल्पिता कल्पना मोडे तत्वता) But it must be remembered that it is only the grace or realisation of the Lord that could completely free you from desires both good as well as evil.

In this way you should try to make your meditation one-pointed and soulful. Such constant meditation carried on for a long period, would gradually grant you higher and higher spiritual experiences, on the one hand, and develop supreme devotion (*Bhâva*) and self-surrender (*Śaranâgamana*) on the other. Both would in the long run culminate in the realisation and enjoyment of the Vision, Bliss and Peace, Divine. Such is the nature of the spiritual discipline that is advocated by Sri Baba.

## Spiritual Experiences

We have seen before how Sri Baba enjoyed splendid spiritual experiences. Here we would point out some of the solutions offered by Baba to problems posed to him about this subject. On one occasion, Baba was asked : " Can God be realised during the present time, as He had been realised by the ancient Seers " ? "Why not ? " replied Baba, "God can be realised here and now. Modern Saints have realised Him exactly as the ancient Seers had done. " On another occasion, one of his spiritual brothers asked : " Has anybody realised God completely ? " " No " was his reply, " God is Infinite. So, He cannot be realised completely. One can eat a seer of sugar; another can eat a maund. Can anybody eat the whole quantity

of sugar in the world? Hence we must remain satisfied with what little experience we are blessed with, by the Lord. ever calmly aspiring for more".

Sri Baba once remarked " *Bindu tethe sindhu* " (बिंदु तेथें सिंधु) "Where there is a drop, there is ocean." At this, a disciple asked : "If that be so, why do we not experience joy at the vision of a drop?" Sri Baba replied : "The above statement carries a double meaning and significance. Firstly it signifies that a drop can expand and finally merge in the ocean—become one with the ocean. Secondly, there is a qualitative identity between a drop and the ocean, though there is quantitative difference between them. A pinch of sugar is as sweet as a maund of sugar. On account of the difference in quantity there is difference in the extent of Joy. That's all."

The famous *Upanisadic* Aphorism "*Tat - twam - asi*" 'That thou art' - has been interpretated by Sri Baba in his own peculiar way which is based on his own experience He used to say : "'*That*' means the *Vastu* - the spiritual experience. The *Vastu* indicates the nature of your progress in spiritual life.That is the meaning of *Tat-twam-asi.*" In the same way,he maintaine dthat the Aphorism"*Aham Brahmāsmi*"-"I am *Brahma*" does not mean that the body is *Brahma.* It means that the *Vastu*, experienced by the *Sādhaka* alone partakes the nature of *Brahman.* His meaning of "*So'hām*" — I am He" was also similar. When once Sri Baba was asked whether the repetition of the words "*So' hām*" would lead to God-realisation. he replied: "*So'ham* is the description of a high spiritual experience. It is not a *Mantra* to be contemplated upon. How can the repetition of a description of an experience lead one to actual experience ? The experience can only be attained by meditation on *Nāmā Divine.*"

Sri Baba once told his disciple that Spiritual Beauty is infinitely superior to physical beauty. Before it the physical

beauty pales into insignificance. There cannot be any comparison between the two. Those blessed souls who could experience and enjoy Spiritual Beauty will never be allured by physical beauty.It will never be able to arouse sensual passion in them.

On another occasion, a disciple asked him: " You have told us that when you are completely absorbed in the enjoyment of Bliss Divine, there is no consciousness of any Guru, disciple or anything else. There is Bliss and Bliss alone. Why then are your eyes wet with tears when you begin to speak about the greatness of Sri Maharaj ? " " My tears are, " replied Baba, " the outcome of my love and gratefulness about Sri Maharaj. But while enjoying the Bliss of Self-realisation, there is really no consciousness of anything else except Bliss " Once again Sri Baba was asked whether Joy is prior to Peace or Peace is prior to Joy. Baba answered : " Joy is experienced first. Then follows Peace. Joy is unsteady while Peace is eternal. When the flood of Joy subsides, eternal Peace continues to remain.But this Peace cannot be experienced without the prior experience of Joy.Peace is the apex of Joy."

Once there was a discussion about the miracles performed by the Saints. Sri Baba explained: " As a *Sādhaka* advances in his spiritual *Sādhana* the so-called *Siddhis* or occult powers rush to him. They pursue him and try to allure him. If he falls a prey to their temptation and tries to use them. they would prove a great obstacle in his spiritual advancement by flattering his egoism. Hence a *Sādhaka* is strictly forbidden to perform miracles through their use. He should, therefore, always keep them at an arm's length. In the case of Saints, it is God, who at times performs miracles for them. They never try to perform them. Neither are they conscious of them when they are performed by God for spreading His devotion among the people, through them."

Liberation or *Mukti*. according to Sri Baba. consists in

the realisation and enjoyment of the Bliss and Peace Divine, as this alone will liberate a seeker completely from the attachment to worldly pleasure by annihilating all his desires. Like Sri Maharaj, Sri Baba also regarded Liberation during the present life (*jivanmukti*) as the only cash (*Rokadi*) Liberation. He used to call Liberation after death (*Videhamukti*) as credit ( *Udhāra* ) Liberation. *Jivanmukti* alone is real Mukti.

## Saint's Blessing to Society :

Very often doubts have been expressed regarding the utility of Saints to society, even though lives of great Saints have demonstrated that they have come down to the world, only for the betterment and benefaction of society in their own way. "A Saint who is not of supreme service to society," declared Sri Gurudev Dr. Ranade, "is not a Saint at all" Sri Baba could not be an exception to this rule.

He was once asked by a disciple as to why a Saint who has renounced all desires, wishes to spread devotion among the people. Sri Baba replied: "All Saints entertain an intense feeling of compassion in their hearts, for afflicted humanity. They melt with pity at the sight of the misery of the people born out of their ignorant attachment for bodily pleasure. Hence they are naturally impelled to rescue them from misery by advising them to follow the path of God-devotion and realise His Vision and Bliss."

Sri Baba used to tell us: "*Navu illiyavaralla, alliyavaru*" (ನಾವು ಇಲ್ಲಿಯವರಲ್ಲ ; ಅಲ್ಲಿಯವರು) " We don't belong to this world; ws belong to the spiritual world." "*Devaru hoga anda. bandivi*" (ದೇವರು ಹೋಗು ಅಂದಾ ಬಂದೆವಿ). " God told us to go; so we have come here." He alse told one of his spiritual brothers : " The Lord has entrusted us with the mission of spreading His devotion among the people. Hence we try to discharge this sacred duty to the best of our ability even at

the cost of our bodily comfort and convenience." This shows that Saints work for the spiritual welfare of humanity out of Infinite compassion for the people and also due to the command of the Lord.

During the last few years of his life, Sri Baba very often used to sing the following *Abhanga* of Sri Tukaram; and explain it : " *Āmhi vaikunthavāsi ālo yāci kāraṇāsi*" (आम्ही वैकुंठवासी आलो याचि कारणासी) "We are the residents of the Kingdom of God. We have come here to demonstrate by our deeds and words, the truth of the Spiritual Message of the ancient Seers. Their Pathway to God has been fully covered with brambles and dust and has become invisible. People in their blind ignorance have been, hence, aimlessly wandering in the woods. We want to clear the Pathway and show it to them. We would sound the drum of God-devotion, says Tukaram, and strike terror in the heart of the God of Death. Come on, ye Devotees of the Lord ! Blissfully proclaim from the housetops the gracious glory of the Lord." Sri Baba, like Sri Tukaram, unfurled the flag of Devotion and gathered thousands of devotees under its benign influence.

Here is Sri Baba's Eternal Message in a nutshell, as pointed out by his Marathi Poet-biographer rendered freely into English:

Remember the Name with constant devotion
Observe without fail your moral discipline.
Keep ever the company of the holy and the good,
And realise full well the Bliss of the Lord !

# Light for Life.

(A few extracts from the letters of Sri Amburao Maharaj given in his Marathi biography by Sri R. P. Kulkarni. Free English rendering by Sri M. S. Deshpande.)

## (1) Primary Duty of a Devotee.

The Primary Duty of a Devotee is constant meditation on the Lord (His Name ). The Lord ever protects His devotees. There is no doubt about it. When the sky is overcast with clouds, it appears turbid But in reality, it is as clear as before. Similarly, a *Sādhaka* forgets to meditate on the Name Divine for some time, on account of the dominance of body-consciousness. And this forgetfulness brings about delusion to his mind. He thereby becomes greatly worried. But if he makes a firm resolve to meditate on Him who has granted him life, and if he feels convinced that whatever is done by God, is done for his good, under all circumstances, and steadily continues to meditate on Him, he would be blessed with profuse bliss by the Lord. We are assured by the Saints that God saves even the fallen. (20-6-1914)

Constant meditation on the *Nāma* with firm faith, will automatically remove all the dangers through the grace of the Master. This is the assurance of our Master (26-7-1914).

## (2) God's Will alone Prevails.

None can counter the Will of the Lord. God alone can grant happiness after sorrow. (14-1-1917)

Profit and loss, birth and death, are both under the control of the Lord. We are simply to perform our duty of meditating on Him (21-10-1918). Please remember that everything takes place according to the wish of the Lord. Hence you should rest satisfied in whatever position He is pleased to place you. (12-11-1918)

You should entrust everything to the care of the Master and be ever engaged in meditation. " Whenever a devotee is engulfed in dire difficulty, he should try to remember the Lord". The Gita has assured us that " all sorrow vanishes when we receive His grace. " ( 17-3-1920 )

## (3) As is our Devotion, so is His Grace.

Our capacity is meant for the service of our Master. We should render as much service as our Master would enable us to do. We may render more service to him in case he grants us the requisite facility and strength.

The Lord grants us as much as our devotion deserves. But then, our devotion must be thoroughly sincere-heartfelt. This is what my Master used to tell me, while he had assumed the body. Baba knows only this much. Realised Saints have stated about such a devotion, as prayed for, by Namadev in his following *Abhanga*.

Live or fall my body frail.

My love for Thee shall never fail.
Never shall I leave Thy Holy feet.
I swear by Thee my benign Lord great !
Thy Name Divine on my lips shall rest
Eternal love shall reside in the breast.
This is my Lord ! Nāmā's prayer
Let my *Sādhana* continue for ever !

You are already aware of the words of the Wise that God or *Sadguru* alone is both the doer as well as the prompter.

## (4) Be True to Yourself.

My great *Sadguru* has personally told me two principles (i) Everyone has his own position; (ii) We must behave with our mind as the witness. These two principles are the real guides for our salvation. Even the casual words of our Master carry wholesome advice. Constant 'awareness is Ultimate Reality, while non-awareness is worldly delusion.' If we keep this maxim in mind always, and behave accordingly we would automatically know everything. We would then feel greater and greater joy. ( 2-3-1915 )

Once we adopt the Path of Devotion, we should never swerve from it. It would bring us discredit. We should bear the strokes of the chisel. Then alone can we attain Godhood. We should ever turn a deaf ear to all public censure.

You have informed in your letter that at the time of meditation, you feel sleepy, your mind strays away from *Nāma*, and that you feel pain in your waist. I am writing this to you as prompted by Maharaj. Please try to ascertain at that time, whether you are remembering the *Nāma* or have forgotten it. You will then come to know that sleep overpowers you when you are not aware of *Nāma*. Hence to avoid sleep, try to remember it steadily. You have stated that due to pain in the

waist you cannot sit for meditation for a long time. This is the result of the dominance of your body-consciousness which is always intent upon avoiding meditation. Once your mind is concentrated on the *Nāma*, the body-consciousness would vanish completely. Even now, your body itself does not observe proper restrictions and regulations. Hence it proves to be a hindrance to your meditation.

Therefore, while rising and sitting, eating and drinking, in joy and work, don't forget *Nâma* and don't fail to fix the inner gaze. You should ever remember *Nāma*, in childhood, youth and oldage as well as at the time of death. Such is the advice of the Master. Mind always tries to shirk its own responsibility by throwing the blame on the body.

As Sri Tukaram has stated in his following *Abhang*.

*Anant* (infinite) are the ripples of *Buddhi* (intellect).
They change their colours every moment.
If we try to hold any one of them,
It will prove to be a hindrance to us.

Here *Anant* ★means eternal *Ātman* who has no end or the *Vastu*-spiritual form. *Buddhi* means the *Nāma* imparted by the *Sadguru*. While meditating on it, various ripples of thought arise in the mind. If we are attached to them and forget *Nāma*, they prove to be obstacles in our medition. Hence whenever we are assailed by them, we should not give up meditation. We should ever preserve this spiritual treasure safe in our heart. We should never forget *Nâma* in all the four states of consciousness viz. waking, dream, deep-sleep and the super-conscious. I have been merely conveying you what I have heard from my Sadguru.

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★ This is the peculiar interpretation of Sri Baba always directed to the Sadhana and Saksatkara.

## (5) Absolute Self-surrender.

Ere-long, I have never entertained the idea that I can do anything. I believe that things take their course as directed by the omnipotent *Sadguru*. My repeated prayer to my *Sadguru* is that I should feel inclined to act according to his advice ... ... I followed Sri Maharaj upto Jigajinni.And after he proceeded to Umadi, I returned to Inchagiri. About ten days have elapsed since then. Still I strongly feel that I am always in the company of Maharaj-not only in wakefulness but also in dream and sleep. It is only when I specially try to remember that Maharaj has gone to Umadi, that I become aware of it. I have always submitted to you at Bijapur that I have completely surrendered my all to you.From that time I have really developed a firm conviction that Sri Maharaj always takes care of me, looks after my welfare. I am ever ready to execute your behests. All my words and deeds are really the outcome of your inner guidance. There is practically nothing which I can claim as my own. I have written this also as is prompted by you.

Sant Shivalingavva

Birth - 1867
JATH

Samadhi : 2-11-1930
JATH

# Saint Sivalingavvva

1867-1930

(*I*)

## BRIEF LIFE-SKETCH

*M. S. Deshpande*

Smt. Śivalingavva was the foremost lady-disciple of Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj. What Muktabai was to Jnānadev what Veṇuakka was to Ramadas, what Mahãdevi was to' Prabhudev, that was Śivalingavva to Sri Maharaj. She belonged to a *Jangama* family of *Jat*.Hers was also a case of blessing at first sight. Sri Maharaja's discerning eye at once visualised the bright spiritual future of Sivalingavva, a girl of 6 years playing with her playmates in front of her house. He called her by his side, uttered the Divine *Nāma* in her wondering ears, and lovingly advised her to remember it. As she had inherited an innate liking for God *Śiva*, she began to remember it often. As she grew up she developed a distaste for married life and desired to devote herself entirely, to spiritual meditation, and to realise the Lord. It was only through the affectionate intervention of Sri Maharaj that she could be persuaded to agree for the marriage, arranged by

her parents. Her married life, however, was far from being a happy one. After she lost her two dear children as well as her husband, she concentrated her whole attention on the meditation on the *Divine Nāma*, and was constantly absorbed in meditation, day and night. As a result of this intense devotion as well as the grace of her Master, she could soon enjoy wonderful spiritual experiences and Bliss. However, she had also her own profuse share of trials and tribulations in her life. It is this bliss and the grace that enabled her to face and bear these diverse difficulties. *Śivakka* also was a poetic genius The few songs and *Vacanās* enshrining her struggles and spiritual experiences have got a supreme poetic charm all their own. They are sources of light, inspiration and delight to all genuine *Sādhakas* and aspirants.

The noble sentiments expressed by Sri Gurudev in the following letters to Saint Sivalingavva clearly demonstrate the supreme regard entertained by him about her :

" For many days I had a strong desire to see you. Its fulfilment during the last *Māgasirsa Saptāh* gave me great delight. Like a Saint who expressed :"My heart is overwhelmed with extreme joy today as I have met a Saint." I am supremely delighted to see you. You have advanced along the Pathway to *Ātman* and have attained a very high spiritual position. You have realised the identity between the spiritual experience of your Master as well as that of your own Self. Hence I consider it a duty of an ignorant person like me to adopt the model placed before the world by Saints like your great Self." (20-12-1912)

"I was immensely grieved to learn about the merging of Śivakka in the Light Divine. The extreme grief felt by me cannot be described in words. My heart is sorely distressed to lose such a Spiritual Jewel like Sivakka. Still what can we poor creatures do, before Divine dispensation? We must take refuge in His *Nāma* only." (26-11-1930)

# Spiritual Blossoms.

(Free English rendering of some of her selected *Vacanās* and songs)

*( arranged topically )*

## *(A) VACANĀS*

### (1) Human Life

1. Rare indeed is Human Life. It enables a person to understand the nature of sin and merit, of religious and secular duty, and of proper thought and action.(II-6)

2. Hence realise the greatness of this human life. Act in the presence of the Lord. Realise *Śiva* and cross this *Bhava* ( worldly life ). And be free from birth and death. For achieving this, first act up to the advice of the *Guru* without fail. Thereby all your sins will be destroyed. There is no doubt about it. (II-3)

3. Don't defile your word and deed. Try to preserve

their purity with care. Then alone will you be able to reach the End of Life. Those who protect their words and deeds, would be endowed with power and devotion. They alone are real devotees of *Guru*, *Śiva* and *Hara*. They alone are, undoubtedly, the devotees of All. (I-16)

4. This body is the City of the Lord. If you leave it without realising the Lord, it would be desolate. Since you have arrived in this City, you should labour hard, remember Him with firm devotion and realise His real Form. You should pray your *Guru* to lead you to this blessed goal, bow down to him with folded palms, be united with the Lord and become immortal. Then alone would you have fulfilled the object of arriving in this City. (II-10)

5. So long as you maintain physical health, you should attain Spiritual Wealth. Then your further journey would be smooth. If you neglect it you would be cutting your own throat. (III-7)

## (2) Grace of the Guru.

6) This Human Life will not attain its Goal without the help of a *Guru*. So, you should achieve the Grace of a *Guru* and realise the Goal of this rare life. Never should you remain without it.

7. Those alone are blessed who have got the company and the wealth ( grace ) of a *Guru* Those that are blessed by a *Guru* will become the beloved devotees of the Lord and wil ever be protected by Him. There is no doubt about it. (I-3)

8. Unless blessed by a *Guru*, this human body will not be able to receive the knowledge ( of the Lord ). The grace of the *Guru* would grant to it,(flaming) garment of illumination. in the absence of which human life would be a failure. (I-8)

9. Both the Grace of a *Guru* as well as the Divine *Nàma* are of supreme importance and value. Strenuous *Sãdhana* would secure for the *Sãdhaka* an exalted place in *Kailãs* ( Spiritual world ). Hence your body should ever be harnessed in the service of the Lord. If you labour hard in spiritual life as you labour in worldly life, the Lord would not remain far away from you. ( II-3 )

10. If you want pleasure you won't get ( spiritual ) fame; and if you want ( such) fame, you won't have pleasure. Hence, you should receive the blessing of a *Guru,* meditate on the Lord ( His *Nãma* ) with perfect reverence and unfurl the Flag of the Lord's Glory in this world. ( II-9 )

## (3) Siva-Mantra & Meditation.

11. We should constantly repeat the *Nãma* of *Siva* and should be merged in it. Then alone would the life's purpose be fulfilled. For, ineffable is the glory ef *Siva-Mantra* ( *Nãma* Divine ). Those who ensure the growth of this *Mantra* ( Seed-*Name* ) and reap its full harvest, would be free from the pitchy darkness ( of ignorance ). The illumination of the *Âtman* would gladden their hearts and would free them from the fear of death. ( I-3 )

12. Hence we should meditate on the *Paramâtman* (Lord) day and night. We should ever repeat the *Nâma* of *Siva*. The meditation on *Siva* would unloosen the bonds of *Bhava* ( worldly life ) and would pave the path to liberation. The grace of the *Guru* is the means of Liberation. Nothing else is superior to it. ( I- 16)

13. We should meditate on the *Âtman* day and night. Never should we forget it. Rare indeed is this Path of Knowledge. We would never get it without the grace of the *Guru*.

Hence we should abandon our vices, secure the grace of the *Guru* and meditate on the *Nāma* of *Siva*.That alone will accompany us to the end of life and none else.(I-16)

14. You should endure the buffets–shocks-of sorrow, me ditate on the *Name Divine* and attain eternal Liberation. Then you will enjoy happiness in this world as well as in the other ( spiritual ) world. The terrible worldly life would be destroyed. Keep the cradle of the precious Divine *Nāma* swinging constantly. You will be happy both in the worldly as well as spiritual life. The *Name Divine* is very precious. So meditate on it ( III-8 )

15. Thrice blessed are those, both here and hereafter, who have received the boon ( *Name* ) from a *Guru*. Those who repeat it will have no fear of death. Words fail to describe ths greatness of the *Maätra* granted by the Guru. O Lord : No offering of mine can ever repay Thy obligation. ( I-22 )

## (4) Spiritual Experience

16. Through the grace of my *Guru* I had the vision of the Spiritual Reality. Through his grace I could visualise the Spiritual World; I could visualise the Holy Feet of my paternal Master. enveloped in the light of varied beauty. Hence I bowed down to him. ( I-23 )

17. Those who sow the Seed of *Divine Name* will not fail to have the harvest of Pearls. Such is the assurance of the Saints. It can never be false. We must recognise the sign of our Creator and remember Him at every step. We would certainly be benefitted thereby. ( II-9 )

18. We should wear the precious pearl contained in the Treasure of Jewels ( of the Lord ) on our nose and begin

to have a look at the *Ātma-ling* The *Divine Name* (*Siva mantra*) granted by the *Guru*, will display before us the Light of the Three Worlds.

19. O my Master! I shall worship Thy Holy Feet with perfect bliss. I will bring the holy water of Love from the well of my heart (and wash your feet with it). I will then place my head on them and will offer everything to Thee. And finally I will burn incense and wave lights of camphor before Thee. ( IV-12 )

20. I was extremely astonished by the vision of such a fragrant worship in my super-conscious trance. It was a worship with nothing. Still it was a worship with everything. I became one with myself. My mind was full of forgetfulness. My ears were filled with Divine Sound. My eyes were filled with Divine Light. Such was the worship of my paternal *Guru* that was blissfully being performed in that state. ( IV-13 )

21. My Guru cleansed and polished my mind, made me absorbed in his meditation, transformed me in his own ikeness,brought about my unison with his effulgence, granted me the direct vision of the Universal Lord and at once dissolved himself in the Infinite, leaving me in the region of *Kailās*. ( IV-10 )

22. O my Guru ! let me, therefore, travel throughout the world and spread the glory of your devotion, everywhere. Let the creeper of your Divine *Nāma* cover the whole world and even transcend it : ( IV-6 )

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★ The number at the close of each Vachana refer to the numbers of the chapter and Vachanas in her original Kannad Biography written by Sri R P. Kulkarni and published by the Academy.

## (B) Songs

### (1) An Assembly of Saints

(This is the description of a Vision by Sister Sivalingavva a renowned, advanced lady-disciple of Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj. She was a modern Mystic-poetess. Sri Gurudev had a very high regard for her superb Spiritual attainments, which were, according to him, not less brilliant than those of Saints Mirabai of Rajasthan, Muktabai of Maharashtra and Mahadevi of Karnatak. This isone of the songs translated and included by Sri Gurudev in his book-Pathway to God in Kannada Literature.)

" While I was sitting for Meditation, I was able to visualise a large number of faces. I saw the *Santa Sabhā*, the Assembly of Saints,where a numbers of saints,sages,*Yogins* and *fakirs* had taken their seats. I was also able to fully visualise Lord *Siva*,who was presiding over them.How shall I adequately describe this assembly? *Vaikuntha* itself seemed to have descended there upon earth for him who realises the full significance of what was presented on this vision. The Assembly was all lit up with stars, moving in the all-pervading crimson

dust. The great *Śeṣa* appeared In designs of various colours—blue, green, yellow and red, each one of them being the unique form of God with a beauty that baffles description.

How easy it is to find access to this God ? What is wanted is only a sincere uprising of devotion in the heart. When the door of the heart is opened and God is visualised, there bursts forth the supremely reverberating sound in which I drowned. Where will you be able to see all this vision ? In the centre of your forehead, if you will. It can be seen only by him who has transcended the three qualities and has devoutly followed the great advice of his spiritual teacher. Such a great Saint was the Saint of *Nimbargi*, who had fully realised the nature of the *Ātman* by *Yogic* process, and had been able to merge himself in the personality of his Master.

## (2) Birth of a Spiritual Son.

( This is another beautiful song of this Saint. " In the prime of her youth she lost her son and took to her spiritual practices with great zeal, and as a result of her great devotion to God, a new SPIRITUAL SON was born to her i. e. she had the mystical experience of vision of the SPIRITUAL CHILD which she has described in the present song ' )

" A son is born to me. and he put an end to all my attachment to self and consequently towards the world. He put an end to all my future lives. He is a veritable magician born; for, after nine months' pain all over my body, he was born to me without touching my body. He is one who is entirely beyond all illusion. When he was born, my whole house was filled with illumination. At the time the son was born to me, I saw all kinds of lights and colours in myriad forms. such as the crackers that send forth arrows, and produce flowers of variegated colours and lights; and in the midst of terrible throes a veritable son was born to me. I

prepared for him a strong cradle of five colours, skilfully mixed. I touched the cradle with my own hand and gave it a swing to the emperean. I gave him a name and sang cradlesongs to him. All this is due to the grace of the *Guru* of unfathomable greatness, of *Sri Nimbargi Maharaj*. I prostrated before him in absolute submission and on account of his grace I got this son."

## (3) Spiritual Cradle-Song.

(After the birth of a Spiritual Son, it was but natural for the Saint to compose and sing a Cradle Song. In this song she describes some salient spiritual experiences conferred on her by her Master-especially the experience of a Spiritual Son. She tells us how he was born and how he grew up day by day-month by month. She puts him in a Spiritual Crodle and invites roalised Spiritual Sisters to join her in swinging the Cradle, singing the Lullaby glorifying her Son as well as her Master. This is a versified English rendering of the same by M. S. D.)

(1)

Remember your Master, the moment you arise,
And fill your mind with *Nāma* likewise.
Impart Self-Knowledge to your ignorant frame.
And live in the Light of the Self Supreme.

(2)

Free your mind from the *Guna's* grip.
Entrust your emotions to the care of Self.
Then will you know the *Yogi's* Bliss,
For which soon seek a *Sadguru's* grace.

( 3 )

He cleansed my mind of the filth of sin
And made me realise my meritorious form.
Well did he feed me with nectar of *Näma*
And revealed the Reality in my daily *Nema*

( 4 )

He annulled my great attraction
for base material pleasure.
And granted me a feeling
that all was a dreamy treasure.
From him I got a Son Spiritual
who grew up month by month
And became my sole Ideal
of highest spiritual worth.

( 5 )

He turned Himself into *Vastu*
in my top-most brain-centre
And I had the Lord's Vision
with the power of perfect *Mantra*
And soon my mind, enraptured
merged in His superb Lustre.

( 6 )

A Spiritual Son is born to me
To him let's sing a Lullaby !
All the objects of pleasure now,
have been flung far away,
Swing the Spiritual Cradle soon
and attain the Lord's benign boon.

( 7 )

Gather ye ! my sisters dear
Ye good realised souls !
Wear ye the nose-rings fair,
of brilliant spiritual pearls
Come ye to swing the Cradle fine
And sing the blissful song divine.

( 8 )

My Master has graciously granted
a supremely beautiful baby.
Never shall I fail now
to sing him a sweet Lullaby.
You have broken my vicious cycle
of recurring birth and death.
Ever, hence, shall I worship Thee
constantly day and night.

( 9 )

Of the ambrosial juice of *Nāma* Divine
is born this paragon of Beauty fine
Unsoiled by the filth of flesh
Suddenly did he alight afresh.
Thus have we seen the *Vastu*
in the fine form of this son
Let's sing a sweet Lullaby
in the Light of his lustrous vision.

( 10 )

This song is the gift
of my Master's grace

A blessing to those aspirants
who realise its deep significance.
But to those who don't care to know
It's a mere mire of illusion
Realise, hence, this Indweller
and cross this ocean of delusion.

( II )

Hush ! Let's sing the glory of our Master
the glory of genuine saints.
Let's have the vision of *Siva*
and sing His blessing great.
Let's remember and sing the glory
of our revered *Umadi Saint*.

Shri Gurudeva Dr. R. D. Ranade.

Born : 3-7-1886
JAMKHANDI

Samadhi : 6-6-1957
NIMBAL

# Shri Gurudev Rambhau Maharaj

1886 - 1957

( *I* )

## Glimpses of Ideal Life

( *Sri M. S. Deshpande M.A* )

### Chapter One : An Ideal Student - Aspirant.

**Prelude :**

Dear *Bhārat* had never been devoid of Saints. In fact, she is what she is-a *Puṇya Bhūmi*-a holy land—on account of the *Tapasyā* - penance of her Saints. Other lands also had their saints and sages, no doubt. But *Bhārat* appears to be a land of their special choice. The number of saints in *Bhārat* and the heights reached by them, is really phenominal. They carried the brilliant torch of spirituality wherever they went and brought fresh spiritual awakening in their wake, even among the common people.

Like ancient and medieval *Bhārat*. modern *Bhārat* also had her saints and sages. These saints opened the flood-gates of spirituality and released a fresh flow of the same. flooding gradually all the parts of *Bhārat*. and trying to reach other lands as well. They have been great power-houses from which spiritual energy is being transmitted and supplied to all the peoples of tha world. They have been thus successfully resisting the great onrushing flood of godless materialism.

*Śri Gurudev Rāmbhāu Mahārāj Rānade* was such a great Saint. one of the precious gifts of dear *Bhārat* to the modern world. *Śri Gurudeva's* life was a mingled yarn of cotton and silk–of intellectual and spiritual eminence, which was beautified by the brilliant embroidary of Silver and Gold-of effulgent Spiritual Visions and Supreme Bliss. However. his intellectual eminence gradually made room for spiritual splendour and ultimately merged in it. Hence when we describe the events in his worldly life we will simultaneously point out how his spiritual life was gaining an upper hand over it and how it engulfed his intellectual life completely at last. Says he : "Spiritual life has been my aim from the beginning of my philosophic career: and let me hope. it would be its culmination as well. "1 We will show now how his hope is amply rewarded.

## Pious Family and Birth :

*Śri Gurudev* appears to be a *Yogi* who had taken this birth to complete his Spiritual Pilgrimage. attain the Highest Ascent of God-realisation and plunge in the Bliss Divine. Naturally, as is pointed out by the *Gītā*, he was born in a pious and wealthy family-( *Sucīnām gehe* ).

Sri Bapurao, the great grandfather of Rambhau, who was once the banker of the *Peśwas*. had later on stayed with the Chief of Ramadurg. as his political adviser. Though he

1) Evolution of my thought.

had wealth in abundance, he had no issue. Bapurao was also a great devotee of *Sri Cidambar Swāmi*, the celebrated Saint of Murgod. Once when the Swami performed a great sacrifice, Bapurao put his whole soul in it and tried his level best to make it a grand success. Highly pleased by his devoted service, the *Swāmiji* asked him to choose a boon. Bapurao prayed for a good son which was granted by the exhalted *Swāmiji*. This son had two sons. The younger of them, Dattopant, was the father of Rama. Owing to some differences, Sri Dattopant was required to leave Ramadurga and seek service in the then State of Jamakhandi.

Smt. Parvatibai, the second wife of Dattopant, was a very pious lady. She had no issue for twelve years, after the birth of her first daughter. That pained her a good deal. She got herself initiated by a local Saint-Sambhuling Swami, living in the neighbourhood, and as directed by him,she plunged herself in constant meditation. on the Divine Name. No wonder, God was soon pleased with her intense penance and blessed her with the jewel of a son. However, at the time of delivery the mother could not bear the prolonged pangs of labour. All the family members were bewildered. But at the suggestion of an experienced servant of theirs, she was given the *Tirtha*-holy water-of *Sri Rāmeśvar*. When Smt. Parvatibai drank it her delivery became smooth and safe. In this way was born Rama at about 10 A. M. on 3rd July 1886. The advent of a son sent a thrill of joy in the family. Thereupon the child was named Ramachandra as his birth was the outcome of the Grace of Sri Ramesvar.

## A Scion of Grace :

Rama was thus a Scion of Grace Divine. Another event that occured a few years later, fully confirms this conception. When Rama was about four years old, his mother Smt. Parvatibai took him to her Guru, Saint Sambhuling Swami. She placed the child at his feet, prostrated herself before him

and implored him to bless the child. The Swami looked at the child with steadfast gaze, A genuine feeling of love and reverence glistened in his eyes. It seemed that he had a glimpse of the future greatness of the child. Suddenly he remarked:

"This boy is a scion of Grace, mother ! He is a budding Saint who has come down to bless the devotees. Let me pay myself my homage to him."

This prediction of the future saintly career of the boy by her Master, sent a thrill of joy in the mother's bosom. Tears of gratitude trickled down her cheeks. She respectfully bowed down to the *Swāmiji* and returned home with the child. An unusual feeling of blessedness filled her soul. Immediately after her arrival, she gave the child a good bath, seated him on a raised seat, applied *Kunkum* ( saffron ) to his forehead, placed a garland of flowers round his neck and washed his pretty feet with her tears of joy.

Rama who was thus born of devotion, as it were, was nourished by devotion and was further brought up in the atmosphere of devotion by his devoted mother.

## A Brilliant Student :

Rama's school and college career was marked by exceptional intellectual brilliance. After completing his Primary education Rama joined the P. B. High School. His keen intellect, retentive memory, humble behaviour and devotional temperament immediately won for him the love and affection of his friends and teachers. Rama's reading was both intensive and extensive. His vast reading outside the regular course of study had greatly developed his mastery over languages. Even when he was reading in Standard VI, Rama had begun to read the works of Swami Vivekanand. He had then the curiosity as well as the capacity to understand the lofty ideas of *Swāmiji*.

and acquire a profound knowledge of the English language. Rama's knowledge of *Sanskrit* literature was yet more profound even at such an early age. His *Sanskrit* teacher, by his skilful teaching, had instilled into Rama a genuine love and regard for Sanskrit literature and had made him study advanced *Sanskrit* classics.

## Blessing of Sri Maharaj :

During this period, Rama had the good fortune of receiving initiation -the *Divine Nāma*-from Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj-the celebrated Saint of Umadi. His flowering intellect thereby had the unique privilege of receiving the spiritual illumination of Divine Grace. Sri Maharaj used to come to Jamakhandi every year for blessing the devotees. In 1901, Kallu Bhokare, Rama's fast friend, had received initiation from Sri Maharaj and had a few spiritual experiences as well. When Rama learnt this from his friend, he also felt a keen desire to have such an experience. At the same time, Rama happened to attend the discourse of Sri Maharaj. in the course of which Sri Maharaj casually remarked: " If one meditated on the Divine *Nāma* regularly one might also pass the examination with credit." This remark intensified his desire for initiation still more. Thereupon he intimated his desire to Kallu who took him immediately to Sri Maharaj.

As soon as Sri Maharaj saw him, he recognised the potential future spiritual greatness of Rama and readily blessed him with the *Divine Nāma*. It was the auspicious day-the fourteenth day of *Kārtik*.popularly known as *Vaikuṇṭha Caturdaśi* of Saka year 1823 ( 25th Nov. 1901) The seed of *Divine Nāma* sown by Sri Maharaj in this fertile,pure soil,sprouted in course of time, unawares, shot up into a big tree and was richly adorned with fine foliage, beautiful. fragrant flowers and luscious fruits.Such was the good fortune that befell Rama on that blessed day.

It was in the same year that Rama was married, even though he was still in his teens, in response to the prevailing custom then. His wife Sau. Sitabai was a good-natured pious lady.

## Splendid Success:

In this way, Rama' head and heart received the support of Divinity which helped to bring about his all-round growth. Next year Rama was to appear for the Matriculation Examination of the Bombay University. His preparation was excellent, He had chosen Bombay Centre. He answered all the question papers satisfactorily and returned to Jamakhandi. Then he remembered the words of his Master. A strong innate impulse to know, to experiment and experience. always played an important role in all his activities. The confluence of these three streams was the spring of his progress, So he decided to test the veracity of his Master's assurance by performing the experiment of meditation. He began to meditate on the Divine Name every day, from 10 P.M. to II P,M. He continued this practice till the result of the Examination was declared. Finally, when the result was out. Rama stood second among all the successful candidates. Not only that. He also stood first in *Sanskrit* and secured the much-coveted "*Jagannâth Śankarśet Scholarship*" in *Sanskrit*. This unprecedented success filled all his relatives and teachers with delight. But the joy of Rama had one more important element in it, This success had intensified his faith and devotion for Sri Maharaj, Name and the Lord. This salutary change in his attitude was followed by a good spiritual experience as well. He had the vision of a Divine Star, the harbinger of further spiritual realisation.

## His College Career:

The scholarship earned dy Rambhau consisted of Rs.25/ per month, to be paid for four year. It enabled him to continue

his further study in the College. He soon joined the Deccan college Poona, as that was the only College in this part at that time.

When Rambhau started from Jamakhandi, he was blessed with a unique spiritual experience. He had the vision of a Spiritual Star on the rising Sun Delighted by this auspicious omen, he proceeded to Poona and joined the Deccan College.

His life in the College Hostel was of the orthodox type. The impressions inherited by him from his mother, were deep-rooted. His mother had advised him never to forget the Lord. Rambhau tried to act up to her advice. His simplicity and purity of character remained in tact even in the modern atmosphere of the college. He utilised the major portion of his time in study and meditation. As he was a genuine seeker of knowledge, and not a seeker of pleasure like several other students there, he was ever engaged in his study. He studied for the sake of gaining thorough knowledge of the subject, and not merely for passing the examination. Knowledge for the sake of Knowledge was his ideal.

Hence, this ideal student soon attracted the attention and love of all the professors who were intellectual stalwarts. Tney literally showered their affection on him. Of all the professors, Prin. Bain and Prof. Wodehouse were very much admired and revered by him. Prin. Bain was regarded by Rambhau as his intellectual Master. He recognised only two Masters. Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj was his spiritual Master and prof. Bain his intellectual master. Prof. Bain had a unique personality. Though a teacher of history, "he taught more philosophy than was taught by a professor of philosophy, and more literature than was taught by a professor of literature." It was from Bain that Rambhau learnt the art of original thinking and research. Prof. Bain also admired the intellectual eminence of Rambhau. Such was the intimate affinity between the master and the pupil.

Prof. Wodehouse taught English and Philosophy. Being a Theosophist he loved spirituality. So Rambhau used to relate his spiritual experiences to him and seek his guidance. He tried his utmost to persuade Rambhau to join the Theosophical Society. But he resisted the temptation of doing so, on account of his firm faith in his Master. Still, in spite of this refusal, Prof. Wodehouse continued to love Rambhau.

Under the inspiring and scholarly guidance of such intellectual stalwarts, Rambhau's intellectual flowering took place quite well. And the intense meditation in the company of two spiritual brothers, carried on by him, along with the deep study, simultaneously brought about his spiritual flowering as well. His intellectual brilliance was manifested in the unique successes in the examinations; while his spiritual illumination was exhibited in the varied spiritual experiences attained by him.

## Prizes in the Examinations :

Rambhau's regular, intense, systematic study, soon enabled him to secure a first class first in the First Year Examination of the College. In the Intermediate Examination of the *University*, he not only secured a first class, but got the *Varjivanadas Sanskrit* Scholarship. But for the B. A, he selected Mathematics as his optional subject along with Sanskrit. He appeared for B. A. in 1907. His preparation was excellent. But unfortunately he got a second class, though he could win the *Bhau Daji Sanskrit* Prize. Thereby he was greatly disappointed, as this failure to get a first class, shattered all his long cherished aspirations, of appearing for the I. C. S. in England. But like Sri Aurobindo's failure in the I. C. S. Examination, this failure of Sri Rambhau to get a first class, proved to be a blessing both to him and to Bharat. It is on account of these failures that two great personalities shone in the spiritual firmament and pointed out the pathway to divine life to many a devout aspirant.

## Maharaja's Prophecy:

Soon after appearing for his B. A. examination, Rambhau had returned to Jamakhandi. He appears to have developed egoism due to the successes in the examinations. Sri Maharaj, who had been there at that time, tried to remove the same, in his own way. There was *Nâma-Saptâh* going on in the house of Sri Dadasaheb Apte. Rambhau also was taking active part in it. When the *Saptāh* was in full swing, one evening. Sri Maharaj asked Rambhau to read the *Pothi* that day. This unexpected call made him nervous. He hesitated at first. But as he dared not disobey Sri Maharaj, he read the *Pothi*. His reading was highly appreciated by all. Praised by Sri Maharaj also. he returned home in a joyful mood.

After the departure of all, some senior disciples, including the grandson of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj, went into the room of Sri Maharaj and asked him why he pressed Rambhau to read the *Pothi*. Sri Maharaj replied addressing the grandson :

"I asked him to read the *Pothi*, because this young man will convey the glory of your grand-father beyond the seas. Such is his great good-fortune. I wanted to eliminate his egoism thereby."

These prophetic words made them all overjoyed.

## Daxina Fellow :

When Rambhau passed his B. A he was appointed *Daxina Fellow* in the Deccan College. He was entrusted with the work of supervising the hostels in addition to teaching Sanskrit to the First Year Class. This brought him into close contact with the students. His simple, loving nature, idealistic

noble life, and remarkable intelligence-all these inspired love and reverence for him among the students. They all related their difficulties to Rambhau with the least reservation and received proper help and guidance from him. Thus he had become " a friend, philosopher and guide " to them all. " I have not seen," writes one of his past students,"such a loving personality like you. Hundreds of virtues found in you, were not to be found in any other person.... You have achieved such great things by staying in *Bhārat* alone. Had you gone to other countries, you would have moved the whole world. "

## Spiritual Experiences : their Verification :

During this period, Sri Rambhau had some brilliant Spiritual experiences. Once in 1903, he was reading Carlyle's Sarter Resartus, along with a couple of friends in the bungalow of Prof. Wodehouse. Suddenly he saw a huge expanse of Light outside the window facing *Ālandi*, reaching the sky. At once he got up from his seat. All others also saw the Light and got up from their seats. This supernatural phenomena continued for a few minutes,

He had once a vision of the Spiritual Sun. Golden and blue spiritual Stars shone before his eyes. The wonderful vision of the Spiritual *Śeṣa*-Serpant-sent a thrill of joy in his bosom. Once when he was witnessing a cricket match, the vision of the whole firmament filled with golden Stars flung him in an ocean of astonishment and delight. This extra-ordinary experience immensely stirred his curiosity and impelled him to ascertain the veracity and value of this experience. He went through the *Rāja Yoga* of Swami Vivekanand within a couple of days. He even tried to ascertain the same from Prof. Wodehouse, who had the frankness to confess his ignorance about it. But he was greatly astonished to hear these wonderful experiences of his pupil. He took Rambhau, to Dr. Annie Besant-his spiritual teacher-at his own expense, and introduced him to her.She was also astonished to hear this account.

She asked Rambhau whether he had been initiated by a Master. When Rambhau showed the photograph of his Master Sri Maharaj, she cast a keen glance at it and remarked: "You are in safe hands". These words deepened his conviction regarding the greatness of his Master, the genuineness of his path and reality of his experience. He got the verification he was seeking which fully satisfied him.

Rambhau took leave of Dr. Besant and straightway went to Jamakhandi. Fortunately, Sri Maharaj happened to be there at that time. Rambhau gave a full report of what had transpired at Banaras. When he showed the photograph of Dr. Besant to Maharaj he remarked: "The lady has practised *Yoga*." This mutual appreciation of these great souls brought home to him still further, the greatness of his Master.

Rambhau got verification of his experience in another way. When he intimated his experiences to his Master, he repeated an *Abhang* of Jnanes'vara which contained the same experiences. Here is the free English rendering of the same ※:

Rolls of cotton move in the sky,
Spread out is a network of pearls.
A flight of eagles fly before the eye
And seen are *Sesa's* circling coils.
The brilliant diamond dust does glitter
On them does *Vastu* ※ shine,
No limit to joy - says *Jnāneśvar*
Everywhere see I great Master mine.

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※ कापसाचे गोळे फिरती पोकळी । मोतियाची जाळी विखुरली ।।
गरुडाचे भरारे जावे दृष्टीपुढे । शेषाचे वेटोळे गुंडाळली ।।
वज्राचिये चुरा शुभ्रवत दिसे । तयामाजी वस्तु शोभतसे ।।
ज्ञानदेव म्हणे सुखा काय उणे । निवृत्ति पाहिले जेथे डोळे ।।

※ Spiritual ensign

## Dangerous Disease :

As pointed out by my friend Dr. V. K. Gokak elsewhere, " Sri Rambhau had his share of the cross and the crown-the fortunes and the misfortunes of life. He bore the cross cheerfully and wore the crown with the deep sense of humility. " So far, he had worn the crown with humility. Now he was required to bear the cross, which he could also bear cheerfully with the help of the grace of his Master as well as with that of his spiritual experiences. This blessed pair of cross and crown, continued to pursue him throughout his life.

When Sri Rambhau was happily leading his meditative life, God wanted to throw this gold into fire and enhance its brilliance. He was suddenly overtaken by a terrible disease. It was the severe penalty he had to pay for his refusal to take the *Prasâd* of his Master on the 5th Jan. 1909. But through his implicit faith in his Master and complete surrender to him, he could recover and gain the assurance from him of a long life.

Rambhau, however suffered terribly from this dangerous T. B. of the brain cells. As no medicine could have any effect, he entirely relied upon the medicine of Name Divine. Formally he did take medicine from the devout Sri Lagvankar, the well known *Âyurvedic* physician of Poona. At times he was even hovering between life and death. His professors proposed to arrange for his medical treatment in a good hospital. But he decided to stay in the town under the protecting wings of his loving mother. Just before he left the college premises one of his friends was daily reading the Gita for him, in the course of which he fastened his mind upon the following verse :

*Maccitah sarva durgāni matprasādat tariṣyasi*
*Atha ceṭ tvamahankārāṭ na śroṣyasi vinaṅksyasi*

"Place your mind in Me; you will be freed from all the dangers

through My grace. But if you do'nt do so, through egoism, mind, you will perish."

Under the loving care of his mother at home he got some relief. Extreme weakness did not allow him even to sit for meditation. Still his mother used to wake him up early in the morning, seat him up in an easy chair, and gently advise him to meditate as much as he could. Rambhau had lost all hope of life and was trying his best to meditate with supreme intensity as a result of which he could have a few spiritual experiences. They enabled him to bear the pangs of illness with quiet mind.

Soon after these experiences, Rambhau got slight relief So he went to Jamakhandi and stayed there for a few months. There he got the *Prasād* of Sri Maharaj which brought him more relief. Just as he had received the *Prasād* before it was prayed for, he also got an assurance of protection from him. It gave him some confidence. Thrice did Rambhau receive the Prasad from his Master as well as the assurance. These brought about some more improvement. His friend, at this time, suggested that he should try to live in the company of his Master for complete cure. Accordingly he went to his Master along with his mother. When they arrived at Incagiri, the sorrow of his mother suddenly burst out in the form of tears. The all-knowing Master divined the feelings of the mother who was lying prostrate at his feet and assured her with these words : " Don't you worry, Mother ! Your son need fear no death for sixty years. He has to carry on a great mission of the Lord. " .

These benedictory words transformed her tears of sorrow into tears of joy. Both the mother and the son were greatly overjoyed. They decided fo stay with Sri Maharaj for a few days. During this stay, Rambhau had the pleasure of taking part in the *Śrāvana Saptāh* (1910). He performed intense meditation in the company of advanced disciples and received fresh inspiration from their blissful *Sādhana*. He thus spent

one month joyfully in the holy blissful company of his Master and spiritual brothers. As a result of this, he could then actually enjoy superb spiritual experiences as well. He had the vision of Spiritual Light full of various colours. " It was," according to him, " a preliminary stage of infinite lights and colours; it has coercive power in it. " In the same way his sound experience also marked a great development. While describing it, Rambhau used to quote a few lines of an *Ārati* of Sri Jnanadeva, the substance of which is given below in his own words :

" When I entered the Sanctuary, my bodily consciousness was lost. My mind was changed to supermind..... Reason came to a standstill. ... and I saw my own Self. My eyelashes ceased to twinkle. Distinction between night and day was gone. The whole universe was alight and was filled with the resonance of God. I was merged in the ocean of Bliss and my Beatification was ineffable. ۞

Rambhau, then, enjoyed the Bliss of hearing the chorus of several musical instruments at one and the same time. Such experiences automatically brought about considerable improvement in his health. He, therefore, desired to stay there and requested Sri Maharaj to allow him to do so. But Sri Maharaj replied : " Now you need not stay here. You may return to Poona. If you meditate properly the climate of Poona will suit your health. "

A few days after this, they took leave from Sri Maharaj and started for Poona. At that time Sri Maharaj gave them the following message :

नेणपणे जाले ते जाले । जाले ते होऊन गेले ।
जाणपणें वर्तले । पाहिजे नेमस्त ।।

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۞ M. M. Preface, P. 12.

आतां चांगले दिवस पाहाल । सुगंध वार्ताही ऐकाल ।
आनंद आनंद होत जाईल । भगवंताच्या कृपावळे ।।

Things went wrong when light didn't dawn
Well ! done is done, don't worry.
Now at least with wisdom blessed
Improve yourself ! Don't tarry !
You'll see good days, hear fragrant news,
The Grace of the Lord will grant you Bliss.

*Chapter II*

# An Ideal Professor.-Seeker.

**Prelude :**

After his return to Poona Sri Rambhau began to search for a suitable job. But maintenance was not the only consideration in its selection. He mainly desired that the job should offer proper facilities for him, to carry on his spiritual meditation well. His prominent ideal even in those days was God-realisation and the propagation of God-devotion among the people. He has expressed this desire in almost all his letters to Sri Maharaj, and has implored him to guide him in his selection of the job.

" I strongly wish, " he writes, " that I should not be required to adopt a profession that would increase egoism, lead to the neglect of devotion or hinder spiritual thought. I do not want it even though it is capable of granting me any amount of wealth. My heart hankers after adopting such a profession which would help the development of devotion and

enable me to spread the power and glory of the Saints everywhere." (20-9-1910). "I have decided a couple of years ago, that I should employ my mind and body in the service of spreading your glory as well as that of spirituality-God-realisation throughout the world" (17–3-1912).

Thus, the attainment and spread of spirituality had been his life's ideals ever since. His worldly life was intended as a stepping stone to spiritual life. Hence, a few hours' work capable of meeting his creature needs, was enough for him.

## Lecturer :

At last he got the post of a lecturer in English Composition, in the Fergusson College Poona, carrying a monthly salary of Rs. 40/. Sri Rambhau was satisfied even with that meagre salary and threw himself wholely in his work. He later on received calls offering better salary. Unable to arrive at a proper decision, he approached his Master for guidance. He received the reply in these measured words : "Engage yourself in constant *Sādhana*. The problem of the job would be solved automatically. Take care of the *Sādhana*, and the job will take care of itself." So he gave up the idea of going else where and continued his present work with all sincerety.

Sri Rambhau was an expert in the art of writing essays. The logic of exposition, novelty of thought, flight of imagination, skill of construction as well as simplicity and music of style–all these had lent a charm to many of his early essays. His skill in teaching composition has been well described by Dr. P. K. Gode, who had the privilege of being one of his pet pupils. Says he : "I caught my first inspiration for systematic study from Dr. Ranade .. I still remember one of his illustrations of balanced sentence he gave from Bain's Rhetoric, viz. "Books help when friends do not and when books do not, meditation." Thus did Sri Rambhau teach his students great

principles useful for their future career, even when he was teaching a language.

## Curator :

Through the grace of his Master Rambhau got in 1913, without any effort on his part, another post, comparatively more favourable for the progress of his spiritual *Sādhana*. He was appointed Curator of the Manuscript Library in the Deccan College, which carried a salary of Rs. 125/- per month, requiring him merely to do research work. Rambhau then began to utilise all his time for reading and meditation. He rarely stirred out of his room. He did not go to the club even for taking his meals. The peon of the club used to bring his food in a carrier and place it outside the door of his room. After the meditation was over, he used to take his meals in the room itself. Constant meditation on the name of the Lord and meditative reading of books on philosophy, on the Upanisads and the mystical literature of the Saints, were his principal occupations in those days. So he had to his credit a good deal of intellectual and spiritual development.

Thus during these three years, ( 1911-13 ), Sri Rambhau by his efficient teaching of the art of composition, developed his teaching and writing. His deep and vast study of philosophy both Eastern and Western, enabled him, not only to pass his M. A. with flying colours, but also to adorn his future profession as a distinguished professor. At the same time, at the suggestion of his Master, he occasionally accompanied him in his tours to different places and enjoyed full well the benefits of his holy and inspiring company. Through the grace of Sri Maharaj, he blissfully carried on his *Sādhana* and attained some higher spiritual experiences.

## His Master Departs :

When his intellectual and spiritual progress was thus in

full swing, unfortunately for him, he was sorely tormented by shock after shock. The departure of his Master was the first rude shock received by him. To Rambhau Sri Maharaj was all in all. Sri Maharaj had granted him new life, shown him the Pathway to the Abode of Eternal Bliss and enabled him to tread the Pathway with courage. His illimitable grace had helped him at every step and showered upon him a few brilliant gifts, both of material as well as spiritual splendour. No wonder if the sudden departure of such a Master proved to be a severe shock to him.

As soon as Sri Rambhau received a telegram in the Deccan College, he immediately left for Incagiri. All the disciples of Sri Maharaj were plunged in sorrow. The sorrow of his senior devoted disciples-Sri Amburao Baba Smt. Sivalingavva, & Sri Rambhau knew no bounds. Still it expressed itself in different ways. Sri Baba was of a serious nature. He could control his sorrow and begin to attend to his duties. The tender heart of Sivakka burst out in tears. Sri Rambhau had possessed reason and emotion in an equal measure. His emotion, which was under the control of reason by day, shook it off during night and expressed itself in the form of tears. This went on, we are told, continuously for full five years.

Sri Baba implicitly believed that Sri Maharaj dwelt in the *Samâdhi* and that he was capable of fulfilling the desires of his devotees. This living faith was the outcome of his direct experience and source of his sustenance and peace of mind. Blessed is the Master who had such devoted disciples, and blessed are the disciples who have such omnipotent Master. Sri Maharaj attained *Samâdhi* on 29th January 1914.

## A Genuine Professor :

Sri Rambhau soon recovered from this shock, regained his balance, through discrimination, meditation and spiritual

experience and resumed his duties. He began to receive calls from the D. E. Society, to join it as a life-member. But as the salary carried by the post was Rs. 100/- he at first was unable to take a decision. But as this Society was an educational institution with an ideal tradition of self-sacrifice and offered an opportunity of infusing patriotism among the students and as there were numerous holidays with a greater possibility of getting leave as well, Sri Rambhau-an idealist accepted the offer at last. This brought a kind of steadiness to his life. He joined the Society in June 1914.

In the beginning. Rambhau taught "Hero and Hero worship-the renowned work of Carlyle, to the students of the B. A. class. The independent. profound and valuable thoughts of Carlyle had made Carlyle an object of great admiration and respect to him. He used to forget himself while teaching this book. He was completely saturated with Carlyle's thought on account of its close affinity with Indian thought.

Along with teaching he carried on his study of philosophy as well. Rambhau began his study of philosophy in order to test the veracity of his spiritual experience. He studied Indian philosophy - *Vedânta* - to find justification for the co-relation between *Advaita*-Absolutism- and *Bhakti*-devotion. And he studied European philosophy to find justification for the co-relation between Reason and Intuition to justify Rational Mysticism. He also wanted thereby to be able to expound it so as to make it acceptable to the modern intellectuals.

## M. A. Examination :

With such an excellent preparation he appeared for the M. A. degree in 1914 with Philosophy as his principal subject. His unparalleled scholarship and untiring study. together with the supreme grace of his Master, enabled him to secure a First Class First in this Examination. He also won the Chancellor's

Gold Medal of the Bombay University assigned to Philosophy that year. He also got the Telang Gold Medal. Nor is this all- The certificate given to him by the examiners excelled everything. In their report they remarked; " The examinee knows more than the examiners. " Such was the extraordinary brilliance of this student. Sri Rambhau had a premonition of these awards. One day when he was absorbed in meditation, he had a vision of the following telegram : " First Class First, Chancellor's Medal. " He also heard these words. A few days after this vision he learnt the actual result in those very words.

Rambhau thus enhanced the prestige not only of himself but also of the institution in which he was serving. Thereafter he began to teach Philosophy. Soon he exhibited his great skill in teaching that subject as well, and earned the praise and respect of his students. The proficiency of Prof. Rambhau's teaching philosophy has been very well appreciated by them. Here are the appreciations of two of his students;

" Prof. Ranade's career as a teacher of Philosophy was a truly great event of teaching Philosophy in the College... His greatest contribution to the Fergusson College was the great learning and brilliance which he brought to bear upon his teaching of Philosophy in the class-room which attracted a large number of students even from far off provinces like Berar and Sindh and others even more distant. He spoke in his class with a sense of inspiration, like a convinced and convincing prophet and enthused his listeners to philosophic effort. "- *Prof. Wadekar.*

" Prof. Rambhau's students attended his lectures with one-pointed rapt attention. on account of a wide awareness that they were in the presence of a highly learned professor.... Prof. Rambhau was not a mere professor of philosophy. His students could readily realise that he was a great man of realisation who had found the path for the realisation of Reality, and had merged in its meditation. "- *Dr. Modak.*

## Lectures at Bangalore :

In this way Prof. Rambhau's fame spread through other provinces of Bharat. It brought to him invitations for lectures from various institutions. A *Sanskrit Academy* was then to be started at Bangalore, for the advancement of Culture. Prof. Rambhau received an invitation from Bangalore, to deliver three lectures on *Upaniṣadic* Philosophy, at the time of the inauguration of the Academy. He had just passed his M. A. and as such he was a novice. Still he accepted this responsible task. This was really an indication of his far reaching fame.

Prof. Rambhau delivered these lectures under the Presidentship of Srimant Sayajirao Gaikwad-the cultured Maharaja of Baroda. Tney were highly appreciated by the Maharaja. .. These lectures formed the nucleus of his future work on the Upanisads. He later on developed these lectures and wrote his work : " A Constructive Survey of *Upaniṣadic* Philosophy " which brought him not only Indian but world renown and honour.

## Chain of Calamities :

So far Prof. Rambhau was enjoying the crown of hearty approbation from all sides. He was now required to face and bear the terrible cross again. This time the cross consisted of a veritable chain of calamities. A few years after the departure of his Master, Providence snatched away from him his near and dear ones. Accident deprived him of his money. Jealousy tried to despoil his reputation. Another deadly disease terribly undermined his health and sharp differences among his colleagues forced him to resign his Life-membership However, each calamity helped to intensify his meditation more and more, granted him higher and higher spiritual experiences and bliss, developed in him the attitude of absolute self-surrender and thus enabled him to bear the pangs of these calamities with complete peace of mind. In this way, these calamities

ultimately proved to be blessings in disguise and taught him lessons of Equanimity so very essential for his future spiritual progress.

## Demise of Dear Ones :

Even though Prof. Rambhau's marriage had taken place rather early in life. he had no issue for a long time . It was as late as February 1916, that he had the pleasure of having a son. As the child was the offspring of a *Sādhaka* like Rambhau who was richly endowed with devotion, knowledge and renunciation, the child became the object of deep affection for Rambhau's mother and wife. But soon fate snatched away from them their darling before it could complete ten months. This untimely demise of the child brought unbearable sorrow to them all. Prof. Rambhau bore that sorrow with the same attitude of absolute self-surrender that is present in the following utterance of Job: " God hath given and God hath taken him away. Blessed be the *Name* of the Lord. "

Prof. Rambhau was trying to forget this sorrow through meditation, reading and occasional bliss of realisation. In the meanwhile he was required to bear two more shocks. The terrible influenza epidemic of 1918 carried away first his dear wife and then within a month, his revered mother as well. Still he could bear all that calmly by the grace of his Master and his spiritual experiences. About the demise of his wife he once told his friend : " Through the grace of my Master I had then performed my *Sādhana* quite well. Hence if I had prayed God to save my wife from the clutches of death, my prayer would not have gone in vain. But since God's wish alone is blessed, I did not think it proper to pray Him like that." Such was the attitude of resignation attained by him then.

His revered mother passed away on 19th Oct. 1918. She meditated on the Divine Name and merged in the Absolute.

When the flames rushed from the funeral pyre, he had the vision of *Śeṣa* ( hooded serpant ) dancing on the flames. This vision assured him that his mother had attained the blessed state. Prof. Rambhau greatly loved his mother. Naturally her departure made him extremely miserable. Still his spiritual progress enabled him to control his grief and taught him to see the silver lining of happiness in the dark cloud of his supreme sorrow. Like happiness, sorrow also is a gift of God. All that the Lord does is meant for our welfare. It is this conviction that enabled him to lead his solitary life peacefully in the company of the Lord alone.

## Adhyatma Bhavan :

We have given so far an account of his sorrow due to bereavements from his kith and kin. Here is the account of his misery born of loss of money. In 1919 Prof. Rambhau purchased a plot of land near Bhandarkar Oriental Institute and got a bungalow built for him. When the construction of the building had been almost completed, he had a dream one day, in which Sri Maharaj told him that Sri Jnanesvara was angry with him. Hence he went to Alandi to have the Darsana of the *Samādhi* of Sri Jnanesvara. Wnen he was paying his homage to him there, his bungalow toppled down at Poona due to torrential down-pour of rain. After his return from Alandi Rambhau observed this strange mishap. Without losing heart he got it reconstructed again by fresh payment to the contractor. He named it " *Adhyātma Bhavan*"-"Abode of Spirituality." This " Abode " has played an important part in the *Sādhana* of Rambhau, both before and after his second illness. On the 13th day of the dark half of *Kārtik* 1841 ( 20-11-1919 ) Rambhau arranged a three-days' *Saptāh*, received blessings from Sri Baba and began to stay there. Here he continued his meditation, with utmost intensity. At the same time, he also carried on vigorously his intellectual activities, such as higher research, study and writing books congenial to his spiritual development,

in addition to his teaching work in the College. He was then residing with his sister in the town. But at night he used to go to the *Adhyātma Bhavan* to sleep. At times he spent days in *Adhyātma Bhavan* and enjoyed the blessedness of solitude. In the evening he often went for a walk by the side of the river *Mulā*, and watch the horrible sight of the bloodred flames of the funeral pyres in the burning ground nearby. He tried to develop his dispassion by the sight. He also used to go to the hills nearby, for meditation. Thus did his *Sādhana* reach the acme of intensity and granted him spiritual experiences of a higher order.

During this period Prof. Rambhau used to spend at least seven hours in meditation. From 8 to 10-30 in the morning, from 12 to 1 at noon, from 8 to 10-30 in the evening and from 12 to 1 at night, he was performing rigorous meditation. He used to sit for meditation regularly at the fixed time, in the manner described in the *Gitā*, by sitting in a steady pose, and by fixing his gaze on the tip of the nose. At other times also he was remembering the Name Divine.

Prof. Rambhau was residing in the Adhyatma Bhavana along with Sri Jagannath Lele and Sri Kakasaheb Karkhanis. They were helping him a good deal in his daily requirements and study. He used to relate to them some of his spiritual experiences Sri Karkhanis has recorded three experiences of Prof. Rambhau of that period. One day he had the vision of the lustrous form of *Śeṣa*, moving round his bungalow. His coils over coils were present everywhere On a *Hanumān Jayanti* day-the birth day of *Sri Hanumān*- he had a vision of Sri Hanuman with flaming face and dazzling golden hair. Once Prof. Rambhau was going to *Alandi* along with Sri Karkhanis in a *tongā*. As soon as the *tangā* left Poona, he began to have the vision of *Sri Krishna*, as described in the *Abhanga* of Sri Jnanesvara, the substance of which is given below. This vision was present throughout his journey till they reached Alandi :

" Your forehead shines with the light of million moons.
You have lotus eyes and a smiling face.
*O Krishna* ! move on ! nod on, my dear !
Speak on lovingly for hours and hours
Lo ! how he stands and swings his arms !
As if beckoning me to come to Him.
Is He not Vithal, my Holy Father ? "

This beautiful experience had immensely endeared the Abhanga ※ to him.

## Flames of Jealousy :

Prof. Rambhau, during this period, was required to face the onslaughts of jealousy. His rapid progress, both intellectual and spiritual, lent him a grandeur which was too much for the petty persons to bear. It enkindled the embers of jealousy, in them, the flaming heat of which began to torment him. " He is a *Pandit* drawing a fat salary. How can he attend to *Sādhana* properly ? " These were the taunting remarks flung at him by the *Sādhakas*. " Well, he is after all a seeker of the Spirit. Is it possible for him to teach in the College according to the time-table ? " Such were the words of censure that were levelled against him, time and again, by his colleagues. Thus had Rambhau become a target of this double attack from his uncharitable critics. But he did not allow them to disturb his peace of mind. Both praise and blame were treated alike by him. He was neither delighted by the

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※ तुझिये निढळीं कोटिचंद्र प्रकाशे ।
कमलनयन हास्यवदन भासे ।।
कृष्णा हाल कारे ! कृष्णा डोल कारे
घडिये, घडिये, घडिये, गुज बोल कारे ।
उभा राहोनिया कैसा हालवितो वाहो
बापरखुमादेवीवरु विठ्ठल ना हो ।

praise nor dejected by the censure.

In this way, the loss of life due to the demise of his beloved ones, the loss of money due to the reconstruction of his bungalow, and the loss of fame resulting from the cruel criticism of jealousy, were all borne courageously by him without allowing them to seriously disturb his balance. He carried on his *Sādhana* and duty as ususal.

## Deadly Disease :

Thus did the Lord test him by removing his relatives, money and fame. But Prof. Rambhau fully stood the test. His faith and devotion, though sorely tried, did not either falter or vanish. On the other hand, it continued to grow day by day. Not satisfied with these tests, the Lord tried to undermine his health as well. He was required to undergo a more severe trial again. The present disease was more terrible than the previous one. If the former was the T. B. of the brain cells, this one was the alarming T. B. of the lungs.

This disease appears to be the outcome of the shocks received by him. In spite of the bliss and peace he enjoyed they could not but affect and undermine his already delicate health. The malarial climate of Poona easily affected his weakened body. With occasional ups and downs, the malarial fever, once lodged in his body, led him straight, in the cours of time, to the portals of death. by developing T. B. germs in it. In the beginning the fever was mild. His high devotion to duty made him neglect it for a long time. This long neglect increased the intensity of the fever, which refused to be controlled by any medicine. All the medicines proved ineffective. His health began to deteriorate more and more. Finally he thought of the holy feet of his Master as his only refuge, took long leave, went to Incagiri and stayed there. "Let body decline, but God should shine." With

desperate resolve, Rambhau relied entirely on the medicine of *Nama Divine* administered by his Master Physician. And he had very high regards for Sri Amburao Maharaj and Sri Amburao also had a very soft corner for him. His loving company proved very beneficial to him. This illness had practically reduced him to a skeleton. He was not able to digest any food. So he used to live on milk alone.

Under these trying circumstances Sri Maharaj appeared twice in his dreams and gave him various suggestions together with a fresh assurance of protection. He also gave him a medicine in the form of a *'flower'* for curing the disease. In addition to these his Master had granted him higher spiritual experiences. Prof. Rambhau has mentioned a few of them in his Marathi Abhang, ❁ the substance of which is given below:

My *Ātman* shines before my eyes
In infinite vestures bright.
*Śeṣā's* coils and moonlight clear,
Are granting superb delight.
Pearl-network and diamond dust,
With a glittering splendour nice
Circle blue in a circle white
Are seen through Master's grace.

He saw the Eye with his eyes. The vision of the "Universal Eye" threw him into ecstasy. Then he had the experience of hearing the *Nama Divine*. When Sri Baba came to know of this superb experience, he asked Rambhau to initiate fresh aspirants, which he modestly declined to do.

Thereafter the health of Rambhau improved sufficiently. He began to eat bread and rice. When he came to Incagiri he was not able to stand up for the *Bhajan*, but on the last day of the *Māgha Saptah* ( 1921 ) after the flowers were showered

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❁ अनंतरुपीं आत्मा विवविला डोळा !

on the Pothi, he suddenly wore his blue silken *Dhoti* and began to serve water to the *Sādhakāṣ* at the time of their partaking of *Prasād*. He even took the Prasad himself. His Spiritual *Vastu*, we are told, was dazzling with extra-ordinary effulgence then, which naturally infused extra energy in him. A few months after the *Saptāh* was over, he took leave and blessings of Sri Baba, returned to Poona and joined his duty. He then continued to reside in the Adhyatma Bhavan.

## Second Marriage :

After the restoration to normal health, in response to the command of his Master, Prof. Rambhau agreed to marry a second time. He actually heard the following words of his Master, in a vision : " I shall send the girl after initiating her.. Do marry ! " Hence he decided to marry again and conveyed his decision to Sri Karkhanis through a letter :

"... In accordance of the wish of the Master, there appears to be a providential chance of marriage. As yet there is no direct permission to spread the gospel. Till then, it seems, we should develop our spirituality fully incognito. Besides, the Lord appears to indicate that I should develop spirituality while leading a worldly life.. Sri Ekanath Maharaj was required to lead a worldly life even after Self-realisation. Such being the case, what of persons like me" ? (21-5-1922 )

In accordance with the pre-intimation of the Master, Prof. Rambhau married Smt Manutai, the daughter of Sri Visnupant Vaidya of Islampur on 1st June 1922. After marriage, Sri Rambhau and Sau. Sitabai-the new name of his wife - went to *Incagiri*. There when Smt. Sitabai was meditating near the *Samādhi* of Sri Maharaj she received the *Nāma Divine* from him on 10th June 1922.

Thereafter Prof. Rambhau had a daughter born to him in January 1925. She was named Shakuntala. After marriage

she was called Smt. Vijayadevi Apte M. A.

## Transfer and Resignation :

A couple of months after the marriage. Prof. Rambhau got himself transferred to Willingdon College Sangli, thinking that the climate of Sangli would suit his health. He worked in the College for two years. During his stay at Sangli, he had the first wonderful vision of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj. One day when he was absorbed in meditation in the bungalow of Sivanagi there, he suddenly saw a vast expanse of light. In it a stately, tall figure of fair complexion, with a round, flaming, smiling face and red eyes approached him. It had a black blanket on its shoulders and had a yellow turban on its head. Rambhau instinctively thought it to be Sri Nimbargi Maharaj and reverentially bowed down to it. As soon as he raised his head, the figure took off its turban and said in *Kannada* : " Ida tago " - ( take this ) and placed the turban on the head of Rambhau. It then lovingly looked at him for couple of seconds and said again : " *In tã* " - ( return it ). At once Rambhau said : " *Tagolri Mãhãraj* " - ( take it Sir ) and returned it. The figure took it up and the vision vanished. Prof. Rambhau was overjoyed to have the vision of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj and thought it to be an indication of his future spiritual mission.

Very soon, the Sangli climate also did not suit his health. So he used to stay first at *Incagiri* and then at Nimbal and go to Sangli to deliver his quota of lectures in the College. This procedure was not liked by the majority of life-members. They expressed their disapproval as well as opposition to it. Gradually jealousy intervened and gave this difference of opinion an ugly turn. The difference of opinion centred round two issues : whether importance should be given to regular teaching or to research and whether prominence should be given to the letter or to the spirit of the Rules of the Society.

It would have been better if the Society had given some special facilities to Rambhau and retained his services. Students this side would have enjoyed the benefit of his unique intelligence and the prestige of the Society also would have increased thereby. But as the divine plan was altogether different, the elders of the Society did not do so and Prof. Rambhau was required to submit his resignation of life-membership of the Society on 20th June 1924. In any way, what happened was for the good. It enlarged the field of Prof. Rambhau's activity and made it national and even international.

## Nimbal Asram :

That a scholar like Prof. Rambhau, fully endowed with modern learning, should like to live in a solitary place like Nimbal, away from enlightened human habitation, was an enigma to many. But those who were conversant with the goal and way of his life knew that it was a divine dispensation. As the climate of Sangli also did not suit his health Prof. Rambhau wanted to stay in a dry place, near Incagiri, having railway and postal facilities. He asked his friends to find such a place. When they were in search of it, he had a vision at Incagiri, in his morning meditation one day He saw a tall person standing before him. He said : " Sri Nimbargi Maharaj has gone to Nimbal Station. " Thereupon Rambhau asked him: " Is he still spreading the Gospel of Devotion ? " To this the person gave a thundering reply : "Close your eyes, ears and lips and silently carry on your meditation " and disappeared. When Rambhau finished his meditation and came out of the room he received a letter from his friend, informing him that he had selected a plot near Nimbal Station and asking him whether he would go over there for final selection. Thereupon Rambhau accompanied his friend to the Station and selected the site. He could soon purchase 48 acres of land for Rs. 400/- only.

He thereafter got a house built there and when it was

ready he occupied it in April 1925. He invited all his spiritual brothers and sisters for the opening ceremony. A Nama Saptah was celebrated with great pomp. A box of holy ashes of his Master was deposited in a niche in the center of the wall, in the main hall and a photograph of Sri Maharaj and his *Pādukās* were placed on it. The *Saptāh* was celebrated for seven days blissfully. It gladdened the hearts of all the brothers and sisters.

Thus this *Āśram* became in course of time an Abode of Bliss and Peace to all the spiritual aspirants.

*Chapter III*

# An ideal Philosopher-Saint

## Prelude :

We have seen so far, how Prof. Rambhau evolved as an ideal student-aspirant as well as an ideal professor-seeker. We shall now try to show how he evolved as an ideal philosopher-saint-how his intellectual and spiritual development reached the acme of evolution. Prof. Rambhau expanded later on his intellectual horizen by his profound and extensive study, reflection and teaching of all the branches of philosophy and his spiritua' horizen, by his continuous, blissful *Sãdhana* and by his ever-increasing, infinite spiritual experiences.

Thus did he evolve, reach a higher stage of God-realisation and attain the power even to bless other seekers. About this spiritual evolution of his, he once remarked : " Through the grace of Sri Maharaj, I have attained the ideal. Now, let the Lord's will be done ! " He reserved his future life exclusively for still higher attainments in spiritual life, as well as for the spread of spirituality in accordanoe with the wish and

direction of the Lord. Really the realisation of the Infinite, Almighty can have no end. So even though Rambhau attained the stage of a Master, he continued to evolve himself and to bring about the evolution of others.

After leaving the D. E. Society, Rambhau lived in Nimbal for three years. During this period he achieved two important things. : i) The starting of the Academy of Philosophy and Religion, & ii) The publication of his book on *Upanisadic* Philosophy.

## Academy of Philosophy and Religion :-

Just as realisation of God and propagation of God-devotion was the supreme ideal of Prof Rambhau, expansion of the frontiers of knowledge through original research in the field of philosophy in order to show how its problems are the same throughout the world,was his supreme intellectual ideal. However he pursued this intellectual ideal, as we have seen by now firstly to justify the reality of the Spiritual ideal and secondly to explain the same to the rational mind of the modern times. He intended to achieve this ideal in the College. But as he could not do so there, he decided to start a fresh institute entitled *Academy* of *Philosophy and Religion*, a body exclusively devoted to research in all the Philosophies and Religions of the world. He opened the Academy in his *Adhyâtma Bhavan Poona*, on 1st August 1924. Rambhau was its Director and Prof. P. K Gode and Prof. N. G. Damle were its Secretaries.

The Aim of the Academy was to bring together all those who were interested in a philosophical investigation of the Problem of God, through research in all the Philosophies and Religions of the world, through publication of original books on the topics undertaken for research and through lectures on Philosophy and Religion at various centres in India.

The urgent need of such an *Academy* has been stated in

the Preamble of the Prospectus in these words :

"The problem of supreme importance to mankind is the problem of the existence of God and His relation to Man and Nature. Philosophy and Religion both concern themselves with the solution of this problem, but while Philosophy engages itself in the intellectual side of this solution, Religion concerns itself with the practical side... Philosophy without the content of Religion would be empty, Religion without the guidance of Philosophy would be shapeless and amorphous. It would thus be necessary to combine the dictates of Philosophy and Religion in the interest of the highest solution of the problem. " (1)

"Knowledge has taken immense strides with the growth of time. Scientific inventions have enormously enriched the patrimony of man. The old order has changed and new one has taken its place. Nevertheless the goal of human life as well as the means of its attainment, have remained the same. Unquestionably, the search for God remains the highest problem even today and a philosophic justification for our spiritual life is as necessary today as it was hundreds of years ago." (2)

True Religion is the direct first-hand relationship of Man and God. Religion is for humanity, its manifestations are for different races and climes. Religion is a matter of eternity; its forms have existence in time.... True Religion has to steer itself clear of both Superstition and Scepticism and it is the helm of Philosophy which can steer it to a safe and happy haven... Hence we must combine a philosophic view of reality with an empirical study of faiths, so as to be able to find a reasoned justification for our aspirations and attainments. " (3)

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1) Prospectus P. 1 2-3) Prospectus P. 2

Thus the Academy would try to combine what is valuable both in European and Indian Philosophy and may offer thought-constructions for the future, in the originality of which and in the theopolitan foundations of which alone, may lie the hope of India as a spiritual nation. But this ideal could not be achieved by the Academy for want of funds and workers.

## Philosophy of the Upanisads :

The Academy proposed to bring out a series of publications on Indian Philosophy and Religion entitled " An Encyclopaedic History of Indian Philosophy" which had both a national and international significance; national, because it would enable India to vindicate her place in the philosophies of the world; international, because when completed, it was sure to influence the course of world's speculations. If interpreted in terms of Western Philosophy, the rich and variegated metaphysical and mystical heritage of India would surely leave the mark upon the course of the world's thought in times to come, This series consisted of 16 volumes, the present volume on the Philosophy of the *Upaniṣads* entitled " A Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy " was the second in the series.

Like the great *Ācāryās* of the middle ages, Prof. Rambhau thought of writing commentaries on the *Prasthāna Traya*- the Three Sacred Books-viz. *Ten Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavadgīta* and the *Brahma Sutrās* universally regarded as authorities on the Philosophy and Religion of Bharat. He wanted to show like the *Ācāryās*, that they supported his doctrine of God-realisation and God-devotion. He studied their doctrines minutely and expounded them clearly in English, in modern philosophic and scientific terminology so as to become intelligible and acceptable to the scientific minds. He thus presented this rare gift of his valuable thought to the whole world.

Prof. Rambhau began to write first on the Philosophy of the *Upanisads* and later on delivered three lectures each on the Philosophy of the *Gita* and that of the *Vedānta*(*Brahma Sutras*). His classical works on the Upanisads and the Gita could see the light of day during his life-time. But the Philosophy of the *Vedānta*, remained only in the form of notes.They were posthumously developed by his disciples and published by the *Bhāratiya Vidyā Bhavan* in 1970.

Here we wish to present a few salient aspects of his present volume on Upanisadic Philosophy.

Prof.Rambhau usually used to approach a subject.from four points of view : 1) the historical, ii) the critical, iii) the comparative and iv) the scientific. So he approached the *Upaniṣads* from all the four standpoints, recognised and accepted by all modern scholars. With the help of his keen intellect, he tried to understand the valuable thoughts of the Upanisads, compare them with his own and ascertain their veracity and value. Then he expressed the ideas that he considered true and valuable in the present volume.

At the outset, while delineating the ' Background ' he has dealt with such subjects as the time and place of the Upanisads, the authors, the general social condition of the period and the like. Then he has traced the development of *Upaniṣadic* Cosmogony and pointed out the varieties of their psychological reflection, the roots of later philosophies to be seen in them, together with their metaphysics and ethics. In the last chapter which is by far the most important one, he has described in an attractive manner the Pathway to God of the *Upaniṣadic* Seers as well as their brilliant spiritual experiences, in their own words. The acme of spiritual realisation, the effects of such realisation on the mystic, as well as the raptures of mystical ecstasy, depicted in the volume are supremely interesting and inspiring.

" The ultimate purpose of this work, " states Prof. Rambhau " is spiritual purpose. The mystical motive has been the most prominent. It would be the problem for the Philosophy of the Immediate Future to place Mysticism on a truly philosophic basis. Rational Mysticism which has been hitherto regarded as a contradiction in terms must now become a truism. The author shall feel his labour amply rewarded if he finds that his exposition of *Upaniṣadic* Philosophy makes a contribution, however small, to the realisation of this ideal." (4)

This publication brought Prof. Rambhau, world renown. His brilliant scholarship captivated scholars. They showered profuse praise on Rambhau. " A Permanent monument " declared Prof. Garbe. Mr. Muirhead opined that " this important book will have the effect of making the Indian civilisation better understood in the West. " " A mere glance at the work," says R. Zimmerman, "will show how far you have gone beyond Deussen's Philosophy of the Upaniṣads. "

It would be interesting to see how he began this work in a spirit of absolute resignation to God : " I took shelter " he says, " in thought that God is a great helmsman on a sea where I have to ply my oars as best I may. To begin is human, but to fulfil is divine. In a spirit of sacrifice I place my work as an humble offering at the feet of God. "

## Invitation From Allahabad University :

Soon after the publication of this monumental work in 1926, Prof. Rambhau was provided by his Master with a better and wider field for his activities. Among the Indian scholars who appreciated and admired its merit highly, Sri Ganganath Jha-the Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University

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4) Constructive Survey. Preface. P. 15

was by far the foremost... He was not content merely to eulogise the work as well as the author, he intently desired to appoint Prof. Rambhau as Head of the Department of Philosophy in his University and give his students the benefit of his great scholarship. He intimated his wish to Rambhau. The following extract from one of his letters reveals full well the keenness of his desire and supreme appreciation :

" .. Anyway, you can give us a trial for a year; after that, if you do not find the conditions suitable, you can tell me so, and I shall see that the final step towards confirmation is not taken and you are relieved.

Please let me know by the return of post if I have your consent to put up your name before the Committee that selects the professor.

I need not add that personally I shall regard it as my greatest achievement as Vice-Chancellor, if I succeed in bringing to the University a professor of your calibre and attainments. So please don't disappoint. "( 1-10-1927 )"

Finally Pandit Jha wrote to him : " It does not matter even if you don't deliver a single lecture. I want to enter your name in the list of Professors of our University. " It was impossible to reject such a loving, pressing invitation. There was no alternative but to accept it. Hence, Prof. Rambhau acceded to his request and joined the Allahabad University as Head of the Department of Philosophy on 1st December 1927.

## Head of the Department of Philosophy :

Prof. Rambhau used to go to Allahabad at the beginning of July every year and return to Nimbal during the summer vacation. Thus he worked there for about eighteen years. During the first six or seven years, he voluntarily studied and

taught different branches of philosophy. He made a profound study of metaphysics, ethics, psychology and religion and mastered them thoroughly. His teaching, therefore, was always replete with up-to-date information and supreme interest as a result of which the number of students in the philosophy department of the University greatly increased.

The following tributes to him by two of his students will clearly show how Prof. Rambhau loved, taught, guided and inspired his students :

" Whoever has come in contact with Dr. R. D. Ranade cannot forget him till the end of his life. His was an angelic personality, radiating joy and peace and spiritual light. An electric smile played on his lips and his eyes shone with a brightness reflecting his inner illumination. I never found him ruffled or sour or bitter or stooping to petty things. He was above all narrow considerations of caste, creed and community. People felt uplifted in his presence, and the more one came in contact with him, the more he sought his presence He was an *Ajātaśutru* ( one who has no enemies ) and a friend of everybody, a seraphic soul "with malice towards none and charity for all. "

" Prof. Ranade's bungalow at Allahabad was rendezvous for the meeting of all aspiring souls of all ranks in life. In these gatherings, sparks from the anvil of his luminous mind would often fly and enkindle spiritual fire in the hearts of the assembled. On one occasion he said in a very serious mood: " We must fill our lives with God. " On another occasion he said forcefully : "We must implant our feet firmly on the back of time," meaning thereby that we must transcend the time-consciousness and rise in an awareness of the Eternal."

Dr. Ranade would receive all visitors to him very kindly and graciously and would invariably offer tea. I never found him assuming airs before anybody.

Ranade was a teacher of teachers. He had his own method of finding out the abilities of students... To all students who joined the post-graduate classes in philosophy, he asked them to write philosophical essays of their own choice... Once I approached for suggèsting books on Modern Western Philosophy. He gave me a lengthy list of books pointing out particular chapters in many of the books where particular topics were notably dealt with. I was simply astounded by the vastness and thoroughness of his learning.Ranade was global in his outlook. Though deeply rooted in Indian thought and culture he was abreast of the latest currents of thought in Western Philosophy of his times. He always advocated " co-related study of Eastern and Western Philosophies. "

Dr. S. N. L. Shrivastava.
(Madhya Pradesh )

" I had the privilege, " writes another disciple, " of being his disciple for two years at the University of Allahabad. He taught Indian Philosophy to M. A. ( previous ) class. I still remember his explanation of ' *Tajjalān* ' the cryptic word from *Chandogya Upanaiṣad* . All powers in this universe,physical or mental, are manifestations of His energy. He is the essence of all beings. One who realises Him finds Him in all beings. As the *Gītā* says : " He abides in all multiplicity undivided. "

The full import of the term '*Tajjalān*', only a mystic can realise. And a mystic can explain it the best. Even though the listeners are non-mystics and so cannot enter much deep into its meaning. yet they are impressed. They are aware of a grand presence.

Prof. Ranade's success as a teacher was manifest all the more at the level of guiding research. It was a privilege to be a research scholar under his guidance. Original ideas and scholarly dissertations are his specialities. First rate theses and books by research scholars are the outcome of his guidance.

Not only his scholarship but also his unassuming nature that made Ranade an attractive personality. It was a pleasure to meet him in his lodge. His affable nature and sparkling humour made his company enjoyable. One has the sense of something special about him. And yet, during my two years stay at Allahabad I could never know that he was a God-realiser."

S. K. Gupta M. A.
(Orisa)

## His Daily Programme :

Prof. Ranade always loved to live with students. He had been, in a way, a patron of the poor, deserving scholars. He used to offer them free lodging and boarding in his residence and enable them to prosecute their further studies in the University. Almost all the students were well-placed after their graduation. They naturally remembered with gratefulness the loving help rendered by him.

In the beginning Prof. Ranade lived in the 2 Beli Road bungalow up to 1940. Thereafter he shifted to his new bungalow on the *Draupadi Ghāt*. In both these residences his daily programme, as described by one his students, was almost the same. He used to get up very early, often between 2 to 4 A.M., take tea and meditate. At times he used to call one of the students, offer him tea and ask him to read English or Sanskrit books or his typed notes. Occasionally, he had flashes, brilliant ideas which he used to discuss with the student with great enthusiasm. These were great moments for the student who got his training into the great truths from the master's mouth Then he used to meditate till the newspapers came before dawn. A student would then be asked to read first the headings and underline those selected by him with red and blue pencil. Then the details were got read at leisure. In the morning he used either to meditate or get some books or notes read by one of the students.

Between about 10 A. M. to 12 noon, he used to go in his car towards the *Gangā* in a secluded field, very often on the open site of his bungalow. He used to take one of the students with him, who read out to him his notes of lectures to be delivered in the class. After reaching the place he sat alone in the car to meditate while all others alighted from it. The student carried his own books to read.

After returning from the outdoor meditation he took his bath with quite hot water in profuse quantity which the servant poured on him. After the bath he used to go to the University accompanied by a M. A. student.... After his arrival there. he used to summon the students for the class.His lectures were brilliant and full of substantial material, though he did not have much eloquence or oratory.

Prof. Ranade spent one half to two hours in the University including his office work after which he returned home for lunch He offered all the preparations to his *Guru*. We never saw him dining But we were told that he only tasted some samples only. He did not take any supper. After the lunch he took some rest, then took tea and got some books read. Then again he went in his car for evening meditation on the side of *Gangā*. After returning he used to go to bed when the night had just begun.

Thus we see that Prof. Rambhau's major avocation there was meditation and study-especially meditation. Teaching and writing were subordinate to them. In the beginning Rambhau used to control meditation; then his meditation began to control him. When the call came, he would at once, obey the call and sit in his room for meditation. He had ordered his people not to disturb it on any account. It was only when the call came from the Vice-Chancellor that they were allowed to disturb his meditation.

## Departure of his Spiritual Sister and Brother :

i) Smt. Sivalingavva-the senior spiritual sister of Rambhau-suddenly passed away in 1930, due to the attack of cholera. She had been held in very high esteem by Rambhau. She was the foremost lady-disciple of Sri Maharaj. By her strenuous intense *Sādhana* and the grace of her Master, she had realised her identity with the *Ātman*. Such was the spiritual height she had attained. Rambhau was greatly pained to learn about her sad demise. In his letter of condolence to her sister's daughter -*Muragevvā*- he writes :

" I was immensely grieved to learn about the merging of Sivakka in the Light Divine. The grief I felt cannot be described in words. My heart is sorely distressed to lose such a spiritual jewel like Sivakka. Still what can we, poor human beings do before Divine dispensation ? We must take refuge in His *Nāma* only. " ( 26-11-1930 ).

ii) Sri Amburao Maharaj-his senior spiritual brother-attained *Samādhi* in 1933. He was more than a brother to Rambhau. Their mutual affection and regard were simply unique. Sri Maharaj used to call them " twins. " After the departure of Sri Maharaj, Sri Baba was a bulwark of strength and inspiration to him. When he learnt about his sad demise at Allahabad, Rambhau wrote a circular letter of condolence to all his disciples. His supreme regard for Sri Baba is graphically expressed in it. He wrote :

" Nearly twenty years after Sri Maharaja's passing away, Sri Baba helped all the disciples of Sri Maharaj by his constant guidance and inspiration. ... There was a great indentity of interest and life between Maharaj and Baba and when Baba was left over to us, it was as if we were seeing and hearing Maharaj. ... The way in which he left his body is quite significant to show how a person like him

who had attained to such enormous heights, dies in the midst of God-realisation. From God he is taken and to God he goes. As with Maharaj, so with Baba, their life and death have been sublime illustrations of a perpetual God-communion." "Even when a *Guru* seems to have departed he still remains at the back of all the disciples, to protect them and further their spiritual endeavour." (27-12-1933)

## Pathway to God of Marathi Saints :

We have seen by now how Prof. Rambhau intended to write three books on the Philosophies of the *Ṛṣis* to demonstrate their support to his doctrine of Rational Mysticism, and had published his first work on the Philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*. To achieve the same ideal object, he had also intended to write three works on the Pathways to God of the medieval Saints. He wrote and published his first work on the Pathway to God of *Marāthi* Saints. The other two works on the Pathways to God of *Hindi* and *Kannada* Saints were subsequently prepared and published.

The present work published in 1933, was originally named '*Mysticism* in *Mahārāstra*.' Its second edition came to be entitled "Pathway to God in Marathi Literature" after the fashion of the other two works. This book is based on four source books, containing selections from the literature of all the Saints. published in 1927. "This literature," according to Prof. Rambhau. " reveals the nature of pure spirituality, capable of bringing about synthesis among the religions and of presenting the vision of Rational Mysticism to the readers."

"The book opens with a fine Preface from the author in which he describes the nature of Mystical Experience, its ineffable, intuitive and universal character. Mystical experience affects our whole being and is a source of fine knowledge, chastened feelings and subtle movements. Hence the seers, on account of the impress of the mystical experience on

one or the other aspects of their psychic being. exhibit different types Some excel in knowledge, some in devotion, others, in service "

The book is divided into five parts. Each part deals with the biography of the Mystics, their writings and teachings considered metaphysically, ethically and mystically, ending with a general review of the period, critical and constructive.

Like his work on the *Upanisad*, this work also received the high appreciation of scholars all over the world. " It is a fine and excellent exposition of the essentials of *Mahārāstra* Mysticism" wrote Prof. Nagaraj Sharma, "which is second to none in the speculative history of mankind." " I earnestly hope," observed Dr. N. Macnicol, "that the book...will reveal to many the rich mines of such precious material that are as yet largely unexplored and unknown to the West."

## Philosophy of the Spirit :

Public Lectures was one of the agencies employed by Prof. Rambhau for the spread of Spiritual Culture. His illuminating lectures delivered in different cities, were always replete with inspiring thoughts. A few of the lectures were later on developed and published in the form of books.

"Philosophy of the Spirit" was the presidential address of Rambhau delivered at Nagpur, when he presided over the 13th Session of the Philosophical Cogress held there in December 1937. In this address, Prof. Rambhau has pointed out with reference to the contemporary discoveries in modern Physics, Biology and Neurology, " how they all tend to prove that Spirit is the only reality, and how Western thought can be brought into harmony with the conclusions of the great Indian Sages and Philosophers. " (5)

(5) P. E. P. 113.

Finally he has stated that " all politics is determined by the prevailing philosophy of a nation " and that " our politics cannot succeed without a spiritual basis. " " Non-violence and Truth are merely the flower of which the root is Spirit " and " universal brotherhood should and could repose upon the spiritual basis only." "A study of the Philosophy of Religion would contribute greatly to the bringing together all creeds and faiths and races." (6)

Hence, Prof. Rambhau declared : "It is only when all humanity comes to recognise the one Spiritual Principle which underlies all things, that we can bring about a harmony between different creeds, nations and races. It is only by bringing them to a common consciousness of spiritual life that we can realise the end which we are striving for. The Philosopher's work is not done when he has realised within himself the peace of mind ... His supreme business is to bring about peace and harmony in the Society, the State, and the World at large. From this point of view, it may be said, without exaggeration. that the future of the world rests with the Philosophers. (7)

## New Building-New Son :

Almost all the events in the life of Prof. Rambhau. are the results of the directions of Sri Maharaj. This new building also is the outcome of a similar direction. At Allahabad, as we have seen before, Sri Rambhau daily used to go to a particular place near the *Draupadi Ghāt*, on the banks of the Ganges, for meditation. Tnere he got various superb spiritual experiences. One day, when he was absorbed in meditation there, he saw the vision of Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj. He thought that it was a holy place, where the devotion of Sri Maharaj would deepen and diffuse. So he purchased the plot and got a big beautiful bungalow built in 1940, for his own residence

(6) P.E. P P.119-120 (7) P.E. P. 120

and began to live in it from Jan. 1944. It was there that one of the main branches of the Adhyatma Vidya Mandir was opened and housed.

" I constructed this bugalow", he remarked in 1942, " without any thought to the future. God knows who will use it for spiritual purposes. This is not my concern. One should work like a *Sâkṣî* ( witness ). God knows the uses of the work done "

In the month of December ( 1940 ) Sri Rambhau had a second son He had also a vision about it. After the boy's birth one day, he saw in his dream his Master feeding the child from his own plate. He had other visions of a similar type which led him to believe that the son born to him, was a great Saint which made him an object of supreme affection. Four months passed in this delightful way. Unfortunately the child passed away in the month of *Caitra* 1941. Thereupon we are told that Sri Rambhau actually quarrelled with God. His main complaint against Him was: " God informed me when He granted the gift; why then should he not inform me when He took it away? .. As God did not do it, I quarrelled with Him. " Rambhau himself once related this story.

## Spiritual Experiences :

We shall now deal with some of his superb spiritual experiences of this period. About his spiritual experiences, Rambhau had once remarked, " I have not mentioned in my books any experience of the Saints, which I have not enjoyed myself. " Hence if we try to have a glimpse of the experiences described in his works, we will have an idea about the variety, richness and splendour of Sri Rambhau's experiences. Nor is this all. He had once informed us that he had the privilege of having experiences not yet recorded in any of the works published so far.

However, the limited space at our disposal, does not allow us to describe even a limited number of them. We shall, therefore, mention only a couple of his visions and a superb experience of Bliss here in addition to those described already.

i) **Prophetic Vision**: Saints see in their Visions the coming events in the lives of individuals, of nations, as well as of the Universe. "Visions reflect the future and the reflected future comes out true. " Prof. Rambhau also had such a vision in 1940 and then for one and half years in 1942. In the first half of the world War II Germany was victorious, and in the other half the allies were victorious. This vision clearly indicated beforehand the working of God in these events. Sri Rambhau has suggestively pointed out his vision in this manner.

"How are the two different strata to be seen in the divine picture ? ... Artists and poets might try to depict it in their own way. Would not the necessity of mystic experience, however, requi:e a pictorial representation of the changing fortunes on the heavenly canvas, in which God with an uplifted flaming thunderbolt might strike mercilessly at one side of the battle, during the first period and at the other side in the reverse direction, with the same uplifted thunderbolt, in the second ? A divine thunderbolt is probably the best weapon to annihilate the contending armies. It would have been extremely fortunate if one had been privileged to see the changing fortunes of the war on the heavenly canvas and to interprete the will of God accordingly. (8)

ii) **Cosmic Vision** : Sri Rambhau had a grand Cosmic Vision in 1943, when he was passing in a train by *Satnâ* station between Allahabad and Jabalpur. All of a sudden, he witnessed a sublime vision of cosmic regeneration. He began with a vision of the Cosmic Eye, which gradually developed into this sublime vision.

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8) B. P. G. P. 276.

" When the Eye stood before the eye, a great phenomenon occurred; the world disappeared. The vision of the Eye before the eye, implied an absolute destruction of the sight of the world. When this individual spirit realised its own nature... I found this Creation full of creative joy, so much so that I asked : ' To whom shall I communicate this experience ? How is it possible for me to express by word of mouth what beatific joy I feel in the contemplation and realisation of the Absolute Spirit ? ' Finally after the realisation, I saw a new glory in the world. It seemed as if there was a regeneration or recreation of the world. The whole world from the earth to the top of the mountain, seemed full of the Immaculate Spirit. "(9)

iii) **Ecstatic Rapture** : All the higher spiritual experiences of Rambhau, always resulted in ecstasy-blissfulness. When he was in that ecstatic mood, he used to utter loudly, " *Nārāyan, Nārāyan, Nārāyan.*" He was in a state of God-intoxication. He had no consciousness of time and space then. He used to tell us that the Bliss of Self-realisation was superior to *Samādhi* which is merely an ordinary mental attunement with God. There is complete assimilation in Bliss. Then you merge in God entirely. " Spiritual joy hovered like an eagle this morning. When spiritual power descends and envelops, the whole universe appears to be full of peace, power and joy. " This is how he described the glory of the experience of Bliss. ( 17-4-1944 )

## Vice-Chancellor and Retirement :

Prof. Rambhau, later on became the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and at last in 1945, the Vice-Chancellor of the University. In reply to a telegram of congratulation by his spiritual brother Sri Kakasaheb Tulpule, Prof. Rambhau expressed the attitude of detachment and dedication with which he accepted it.

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9) P. G. K. PP. 283-85

" I had really no desire to accept this job, but as one must bow down to the will of God, I had to accept it. As my sole ambition has been to carry on my spiritual pursuit as best I may, I had not agreed to Amaranath Jha's suggestion made a year ago. But whatever befalls us, we must discharge dutifully, all the while believing that whatever we do, contributes to the fulfilment of His purpose. " ( 31-3-1945 )

Prof. Rambhau retired in 1946. Thereafter the Executive Council of the University created a special honorary post entitled 'Emeritus Professor of Philosophy' in order that the University might maintain its contact with such an eminent scholar till the end. Later on in 1947, the University arranged a special Convocation Ceremony for honouring persons of world-wide fame in Bharat, when the University conferred the D. Litt. degree on Prof. Rambhau, in recognition of his unparalleled intellectual eminence. Such was the consummation of his professorial career.

As a Vice-Chancellor Prof. Rambhau had sent the following message to the Harijan boys of the Harijan Ashram at Allahabad where he had been invited to address the students: " God must be the first object of our care whatever work we may undertake during our life. This will certainly enable the boys to give a very good account of themselves, to their Society, Nation, as well as to their own Maker ( 7th Aug. 1946 ).

*Chapter IV*

# An Ideal Master-Apostle.

**Prelude :**

Dr. Rambhau, after discharging his duty as Ideal Philosopher-Saint or Saint-Philosopher, assumed the role of a Master - ( *Gurudev* )- Apostle- (*Prabodhaka*) as has been stated by Sri Gurudev elsewhere. " A mystic may be a Philosopher but is not necessarily so. His mystic experience is sufficient for his own elevation into Divinity; but if he philosophises, he may raise thinking humanity into a Divine Kingdom of Ends." (1) " He Is of supreme service to humanity, by calling their attention from moment to moment, to the perfection and greatness of God. There have been mystics who have moved the world by their Divine Contemplation. Unmoved themselves, they have become men of world-shaking type. " (2)

In this way our Mystic Philosopher-Sri Gurudev spent

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1) M. M. P. 394. 2) M. M. Preface P. P. 28-29.

his whole time, thereafter, exclusively for Divine Contemplation and for spreading the Gospel of God-devotion. He carried on this mission mainly from Nimbal where he resided permanently after his retirement as well as from Allahabad where he used to go and stay in his house for a couple of months in winter every year.

## Ideal Gurudev :

Sri Gurudev had developed and possessed all the necessary qualifications of an Ideal Master. He had practically reached the zenith of realisation. He had thus acquired the authority to grant to the seekers what he himself had attained. He had not only possessed the Seed-Name ( Sabīja-Nāma )and superb spiritual experiences, but had acquired some supernatural powers as well. He could realise through them the nature of the aspirants as well as the intensity of their aspiration. He could easily read the minds of others. But rarely did he use them consciously. At times it was God who made use of them through him, even without his knowledge, to spread His devotion. Sri Gurudev strongly maintained that it is not the business of a Saint to try to uplift the world by performing miracles. His only duty is to fill the whole world with the resonance of God-devotion through the purity and nobility of his behaviour and the intensity of his devotion and *Bhajan*.

However, Sri Gurudev had once shown a terrible vision to his wife a few months before his departure, the reason of which was known to him only. Here is the glimpse of the vision.

One day, *Sri Gurudev* was sitting alone in his room to prepare his tea as usual. His wife was bringing in, all the articles required by him. When she entered the room for the last time, holding the pots of milk in both her hands, she observed a wonderful phenomenon. Sri Gurudeva's face had

become intensely red and had assumed the face of *Sri Hanumān* with a crown on his head. Above his head was seen a gigantic, brilliant *Śeṣa* ( Cobra ) with all his hoods spread out. The colour of his body was yellow. His eyes were glittering like red jewels. This astounding vision greatly terrified her, and she began to tremble from head to feet. The milk-pots were on the verge of slipping down from her trembling hands, when Gurudev spoke in a serious tone : " Well ! sit down, sit down, Don't be afraid ! Sometimes it does happen like that." So she sat. After some time she was free from fear. Sri Gurudev then ascertained from her the details of the incident, smiled and remained silent.

Secondly Sri Gurudev was adept in the essentials of both Indian and Western Philosophy. So he could easily solve the difficulties of his disciples and rationally convince their modern, scientific minds. Thus he had been an Ideal Master to guide the modern aspirants from step to step on the ladder of spiritual perfection.

## Initiation :

In this *Sampradāya*, initiation consists in imparting the *Seed-Nāma*-Divine Name-by a realised *Sadguru*, to an aspirant. The disciple,then,is to water the seed with the constant shower of one-pointed meditation and reap the harvest of spiritual experience and bliss, through the grace of his Master. Sri Gurudev began to initiate those aspirants whom he found to be very earnest. But later on, when people from all walks of life began to flock to him for initiation he began to bless all of them. As he advanced further, blessing the aspirants became his very nature. He even especially invited some deserving aspirants and blessed them. Very often he used to tell us that the emotion of affection that arises in the heart of the Master at the time of imparting initiation is similar to the one that arises in the heart of the mother at the time

of feeding her child. The mother nourishes the body while the Master nourishes the soul by granting the ambrosia of Divine Name. Is it not in the fitness of things that the spiritual mother should feel the emotion of love more intensely than the physical mother ?

Sri Gurudev like his predecessors, did not directly initiate his disciples. His was an indirect process. The Name he imparted was the one he had realised himself. But he used to impart it through two of his spiritual brothers. He had used this indirect method, because, he never liked the flare and glare of '*Gurudom*'. He never loved to shine in the limelight, but to shed a placid illumination from his solitary corner. He always liked the indirect method of guidance. He solved their difficulties also in a suggestive, indirect manner. His silence was more eloquent than his words; suggestion more effective than expression.

Sri Gurudev very often shared the sorrow of his disciples and lightened its intensity and shared his bliss with them and heightened its fulness.

## Common Meditation and Inspiring Talks :

To grant intellectual, emotional, moral, and intuitional training to the *Sādhakās*, the Masters of this *Sampradāya*, had arranged some festivals called *Saptāhas* at *Incagiri*, ranging from five days to one month. All the seekers were asked to attend them according to their convenience, take part in the common meditation, *Bhajan* etc. in the company of their Masters and listen to the inspiring discources given by them. Thus during these festivals, the seekers used to get their spiritual batteries charged properly.

Sri Gurudev also made effective use of such festivals for training his disciples. However, he had introduced a few

changes in them to suit the needs of his modern disciples. During his time, there used to be four *Saptahās* - two of five days in *Caitra* and *Kartik*, and two, of one month in *Śrāvaṇa* and *Māgh*. Instead of giving discourses like his Masters, he used to give informal talks to the disciples.

The common meditation in the company of the *Sādhakās* had been a special feature of this *Sampradàya*. It had been regarded as the most effective means of heightening the intensity of meditation. Moreover, " where two or three gather in My name, I am there, " declares the Lord The presence of God in the gathering of Saints and *Sadhakas*, is supremely inspiring and blissful. When the *Sādhakas* meet together for meditation they enjoy the presence of God.

During his stay at Nimbal and Allahabad, Sri Gurudev used to give informal talks in Sittings whenever there were a few *Sādhakas* by his side. These talks were given, usually in the afternoon, after his meditation was over.

*Sri Gurudev* never posed as a Master. He always sat in a corner, along with his disciples, on the same carpet. He never delivered a sermon. He thus demonstrated as it were. through his behaviour, the way in which an ideal spiritual Master should conduct himself.

" As these Sittings were informal, *Sri Gurudevji's* inner thoughts and feelings had a spontaneous expression in them. These sittings were not always serious; they were occasionally illumined by flashes of wit, humour and consequent laughter. Sri Gurudev also took a lively part in them without the least reservation. At times he himself would relate a humorous anecdote or story and begin to have a hearty laugh and plunge all in a hilarious laughter. Generally Gurudev did not take an active part in the discussion; still his silence itself was more eloquent than his words... He always loved to make

others speak for him. However, his occasional fine remarks provided a feast of *Bodha-sudhā* - ambrosia of advice - both about spiritual knowledge as well as about divine devotion served along with various dishes suited to the varied tastes of the devotees.

In this way the talks generated love for spiritual life in many; fortified their faith by removing indirectly their misgivings and misconceptions;supplied them fresh inspiration to steadily pursue the spiritual *Sādhana*, by giving them the necessary guidance.

## Public Lectures :

Just as *Sri Gurudev* used to give private talks for the edification of the aspirants and seekers, he had also delivered public lectures for the enlightenment of the public in general. The lectures were delivered in some of the cities of Bharat- from Bangalore in the south to New Delhi in the North. Whenever he was invited by the Universities and other Public Institutions, he used to go there and convey the message of the Saints and Sages to the elite of the place. He used to remove the misconceptions prevailing in the modern minds regarding the efficacy of moral and spiritual values in the practical life of the present day society, by his wide and deep learning and rational treatment of the subject. He thus used to bring to them the supreme value of spirituality and the urgent need of cultivating it in life, in the interest of peace and welfare of the individual, society, nation as well as the world at large.

All these lectures provided sufficient light and inspiration to the aspiring souls that were required to live and move in the all-enveloping dense darkness of aggressive materialism. Hence they were highly appreciated by such persons. Even though there was no flight of eloquence from his smiling lips,

there used to have a steady flight of spiritual illumination from his lustrous eyes. Choice words gushed out from the depth of conviction born of spiritual experience.They easily captivated the receptive hearts, and produced a deep impression upon them. Thus did *Gurudev* propagate the Gospel of God-devotion among the public.

A couple of years after he began this mission, *Sri Gurudev* had a vision of Sri Maharaj again. This time Sri Maharaj had held a *Vinā* in his hands.So *Sri Gurudev* thought it to be an indication that he should deliver the message of Saints through the elucidation of their choice songs. From that time he began to make use of such songs in his lectures and explain their spiritual significance. These lectures were later on developed and published in the book-form.

## Adhyatma Vidya Mandir :

The genesis of this institution is very inspring. In 1947 H. H. the Rajashab of Sangli, who was a sincere lover of Spiritual life, had invited *Sri Gurudev* to his Palace at Sangli. During the stay of *Sri Gurudev* there, he once intimated his inner feelings to Sri Gurudev in these words : " The noblest, the grandest and the most glorious that you can conceive of may be done. You are the architect, we the humble tools in your hands." This request resulted in the starting of the above institution on 26th October 1947. Srimant Rajasaheb offered a munificient annual donation to the Institution for a period of five years and became the Grand-Patron of this *Adhyātma Vidyā Mandir* - a Temple of spiritual Lore. *Sri Gurudev* was its Director and Sri G. V. Tulpule M. A. was its Secretary.

The aim of the *Mandir* was to work for the spiritual unity of mankind and consequent goodwill and peace upon earth, through i) religious and philosophic publications, ii) research, iii) lectures, iv) meetings & v) conferences.

The activities of the *Mandir* began under fine auspices. Its branches were opened at Allahabad, Sangli, Dharwar, Belgaum, and N mbal was the main Centre.With the help of the donation research scholarships were given to deserving students. Lectures were also arranged on spiritual and cultural subjects and a few books were published. The *Hindi Paramārtha-sopāna* and the Pathway to God in *Hindi* Literature by *Sri Gurudev* were the two major publications of the *Mandir.* Thus the activities of the *Mandir* were in full swing for five years. Thereafter, along with the donation, the activities also stopped.

## The Pathway to God of Hindi Saints :

We have already seen how *Sri Gurudev* wanted to write three books on the Pathways to God of *Hindi, Marathi* and *Kannada* Saints. Accordingly, he had already published the book about the Pathway to God of *Marâthi* Saints. He published this second work under the title "Pathway to God in *Hindi* Literature" in April 1954.It is also based on a Source-book entitled *Hindi Paramārtha Sopāna* which was published in January of the same year at the hands of Dr. Radhakrishnan. It is a book of choice selections of the Padas and Dohas of Hindi Saints, possessing 'novelty of thought and spiritual import.'

The book consists of two parts entitled : i) Pathway in *Pada* literature and ii) Pathway in *Dohâ* literature. Each part is further divided into five chapters. It is a constructive work like his work on the *Upaniṣads.*

The following headings of the five chapters point out the five stages of *Sri Gurudevâ's* Pathway to God in Hindi Literature; i) Incentives to Spiritual Life, ii) Necessity of Moral Preparation, iii) The Relation of God to Saints, iv) The Beginnings of the Pilgrimage and v) The Highest Ascent. The first

stage of the Pathway, reveals the causes that lead the seeker to spiritual life, brings about a change in his values and likes and thus contributes to his emotional preparation. The second requires the elimination of vices and the development of virtues and thus contributes to his moral preparation. The third stage describes the glory and bliss received by the Saints from the unlimited power and grace of the Lord and gives the seeker a full glimpse of the ideal he is to reach and thus contributes to his intellectual preparation. The fourth gives an idea of actual pilgrimage. It describes the Master, his method of initiation, the *Divine Name* and its constant meditation and the like and helps to bring about his intuitional preparation. The fifth and the last describes the nature of God-realisation and the Bliss arising from it as well as the effects produced by them on the lives of the seekers and the society.

While dealing with the thoughts of *Hindi* Saints, Sri Gurudev has compared them with those of *Kannada*, *Marathi* and *Christian* Saints and pointed out the striking similarities between them. He has also referred to his own spiritual experiences. This is one of the special features of the book.

## Pathway to God of Kannada Saints :

This book entitled *Pathway to God In Kannada Literature* was a posthumous publication of Gurudev. It was published in 1960 by the *Bhāratiya Vidyā Bhavan*, Bombay, on behalf of the *Karnatak University* Dharwar. Sri Gurudev could complete only fourteen out of twenty chapters during his life-time, while the remaining six were written by his disciples and friends with the help of copious notes which he had left behind.

This book has been designed almost on the lines of his book about *Hindi* Saints. This is also based upon a source book-entitled *Kannada Paramārtha Sopāna*, - a book of selections from the writings of *Kannada* Saints. "Novelty of thought

coupled with spiritual import " was the criterion of selection in this case as well The great mystics thus secured the services of an equally great modern mystic—who was also a great philosopher—to interprete them and spread their message in the modern world.

About the object of this volume Sri Gurudev writes : " ... The great *Kannada* Mystics evidently ramify themselves into two schools. - *Śaivite* and *Vaiṣṇavite*. But a real Mystic is he who is neither a *Śaivite* nor a *Vaiṣṇavite* .. My problem is to deal only with their common spiritual experiences and not with their dogmatic differences, and what they have contributed to the development of mystic thought in general." (1)

Here is the great tribute he pays to the *Kannada* Mystics : " The *Karnãtak* Mystics hold a very high position among the mystics of the world and they have contributed a good deal to the world's mystical thought. " (2)

Finally, as a great critic has remarked : This book is unique of its kind, inasmuch as it is firmly founded on the first-hand mystical experiences of the author. .. Sri Gurudev has presented in this volume the quintessence of his mature thought and advanced experience, in a thorough, rational and scientific manner and in a language at once translucent, limpid and impressive. "

The unique originality and value of the fresh interpretations of the songs by Sri Gurudev is finely reflected in the following critical appreciation of the same by an eminent modern critic - Dr. V. K. Gokak : " He ( Dr. Ranade ) shows how the experience embodied in this poetry is the same as that of the mystics all over the world. Many obscure songs suddenly spring to life in the revelatory light that he sheds on them by referring frequently to his own experience. This is specially

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1) P. G. K. P 6 2) P. G. K. P. 11.

true of the account he gives of the mystic poets of *Karnātak*. He penetrates through various philosophical terminologies and diverse credal formations to the core of experience that lies enshrined within them, and brings out the universal significance that underlies various forms and beliefs. This serves to underline the unity of Indian thought that persists through a bewildering variety of forms." (3)

## Philosophy of the Bhagavad-gita

The present work entitled "*The Bhagavadgīta* as a Philosophy of God-realisation" was the second book of Sri Gurudeva's *Prasthāna - traya*. Like his first book on the Philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*, this is also based on a series of three lectures delivered by him under the auspices of the Nagpur University in 1928. His own estimate of the book will reveal its real greatness. "I think," says he, "the present book on the *Bhagavadgīta* would in no way be less important than either my 'A Constructive Survey of *Upaniṣadic* Philosophy' which has already been published or my work on '*Vedānta* as the Culmination of Indian Thought' to be published by the *Calcuttu* University, the three constituting a modern *Prasthāna traya*."

"God-realisation," according to Gurudev. "is the Supreme Teaching of the *Bhagavadgīta*." As this simple doctrine did not prominently dawn upon the ancient and the modern interpreters of the *Gita*, they have produced a labyrinth from which in the absence of this clue of God-realisation, they could not find a way of escape." (4)

"The present work is divided into five parts The first part deals with the ancient systems with which the *Bhagavadgīta* comes into relation. The second part deals with the thought

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3) R. L. L. Foreword 1 X. 4) B.P.G--P3

of the middle ages where we find the great Vedantic scholars and spiritual teachers throwing light on the meaning of the *Bhagavadgītā*. The third part deals with the veritable labyrinth that has been produced by the interpretations of the modern scholars. The fourth part deals with our solution of the problem in terms of contemporary thought and mode of procedure. The last deals in a general way, with conception of the Sublime ... which has assumed great importance with eminent European Philosophers, linking it up with the conception of the Divine." (5)

Part IV is the core of the work. Here we come across the independent, unique and valuable contribution of Gurudev to the interpretations of the *Gīta*. Here we have a glimpse of his integral vision, his synthetic outlook, born of God—realisation. The main aspects of Philosophy viz. metaphysics, ethics and mysticism have been properly dealt with in it, from the practical point of view. After dealing with the antinomies embedded in thought of God, World and Soul, together with their solution as pointed out in the *Gīta*. the Problem of God is being taken up for discussion. God has been described as wonder of wonders. However, we are told, that He can be realised though not in His entirety. Then the four aspects of ethics viz. Activism, Moralism, Super-moralism and Beatificism have been discussed. The Activism of the *Gīta* advocates duty not for the sake of duty but for the sake of the Divine. *Bhakti* or God-idevotion is the central virtue in the *Gita*. All other virtues are ts emanations and vices, aberrations from it. The Super-moralism of the *Gīta* requires the seeker to rise above the *Guṇās* and the *Karmās* and become a *Sthita-prajna*-Equanimous Man, which is according to the *Gīta*, the highest ideal realisable by man. This is only possible if he takes resort in God, realises Him and enjoys His Bliss. Really Beatificism is the crown of Equanimity. The Saint is full of Bliss when he becomes one with *Brahman*. In fact Bliss itself is *Brahman*. So

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5) B. P. G. P. 13

far as the mystic aspect of this Philosophy is concerned, after pointing out the criteria of God-realisation, the categories of God-seekers, the methods of meditation have been elaborately dealt with. Thereafter, the Beautiful Self-Vision and the Sublime Cosmic Vision have been described. It has been pointed out that Beauty attracts while Sublimity conquers. These Visions are associated with the feelings of Joy, Peace, Fear and Reverence. Peace, however, does not lead to joy, but joy leads to peace; and hence peace might be regarded as the apex of joy. Finally, it is shown that the Moral, the Sublime and the Divine - all merge in one consummate Philosophy of Spirit in the *Bhagavadgita*.

This is the last and the best work completed by Gurudev during his lifetime. It is his crowning contribution to the mystical literature. The book was published by the Nagpur University in 1959-two years after his *Mahāsamādhi*.

## Philosophy of Vedanta ( Brahma-Sutras )

This book which was given a fresh title - " *Vedânta* as the Culmination of Indian Thought " - has been based on a series of four lectures delivered by Sri Gurudev in 1929 under the auspices of the Calcutta University, on ' *Vedānta and Western Thought*. Later on he twice revised and changed the outline and finally decided to give the above-mentioned title. He divided it into the following ten chapters :

1. The Cosmological Problem.
2. The Metaphysical Problem.
3. The Problem of Logic.
4. The Epistemological Problem
5. The problem of God.
6. Relation of God to the World.
7. Causality and Appearance.
8. Problem of the Self.
9. The Ethical Problem.
10. The *Summum Bonum*.

As we have seen before, this book was written by his disciples with the help of his copious notes and published by

the *Bhāratiya Vidyā-Bhavan* in 1976.

As the title of the present book indicates, the Philosophy of *Vedānta of Sri Bādarāyana*, is really, according to Sri Gurudev, a Culmination of Indian thought. *Bādarāyana* has tried to reconcile all the conflicting thoughts of his times and present his synthetic Philosophy to the elite of India. Likewise, Sri Gurudev has tried to reconcile the conflicting claims of all the thought-currents, both Indian and European, and expound his synthetic Philosophy in all his works in Western garb, for the edification of the contemporary thinkers of the world. Thus he has played the role of a modern *Bādarāyaṇa*.

Let us now have a glimpse of the Metaphysics and Mysticism of *Bādarāyaṇa* as expounded by Gurudev in the present work.

To *Bādarāyaṇa* God is the only Reality, who is called *Brahman*. God is both Impersonal - *Nirguna* and Personal - *Saguṇa*. He is in a way transpersonal. God is also both transcendent and immanent. As impersonal, God is ineffable and transcendent. As personal, He is immanent and *Sat-Cit-Ānaṇda*- Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. (6) God is full of Consciousness or Consciousness itself. He is full of Bliss or Bliss itself. The criteria for the proof of God are three-Reason, Revelation and Intuition or *Anubhava* of which Intuition occupies a supreme place.

God is immanent in the Universe as its inner Ruler- *Aṇtaryāmin* or as the Spirit that pervades it. He is also regarded as all-inclusive, both good and evil having a place within Him (7). He is the material as well as efficient cause of the world, which is empirically real but transcendentally unreal. It springs from God, lives in God and is finally absorbed in God. But the how and why of Creation is mysterious. It defies solution. The world is a mysterious mode of God. *Vicitravāda* appears to be the only solution (8)

6) V.C T. P. 77 7) Ibid P. 89 8) V. C. T. P. 112

The Self is an *Aṁśa*-portion of God. When it is attached to sense-organs through nescience, it is active and is then both doer and sufferer. But " man is neither a free agent nor a bare automaton in the hands of God but he is an actor under the supervision of God...God has given autonomy to man, He does not interfere with man's freedom. This is Divine Self-determinism. " (9)

Now what is the *Summum Bonum* of life according to *Bādarâyaṇa*? Self-realisation constitutes his *Summum Bonum* or *Purusârth*. For attaining this highest ideal a judicious combination of *Vedāṇta*, *Yoga* and *Bhakti* has been prescribed by him. " A full-fledged life of mysticism reconciles alike the claims of intellect, emotion and action. It would be wrong to say that mere intellect, or mere emotion or mere action leads to the realisation of the supreme ideal .. One or the other may be stresed,no doubt, but all must be present in a greater or lesser degree, to enable one to attain to that Divine Bliss."(10)However, *Bâdarāyan* maintains that it is only those who practise unitive meditation on the *Âtman* as *Ātman* or the Lord, who will be finally liberated.

Now Liberation which is the goal of meditation is identical with Self-realisation. It is not merely intellectual conviction. It is actual intuitional experience of God and enjoyment of His Bliss here in this very life.

The realised or released Soul - *Jivanmukta* - not only shares the Bliss of the Lord, but also all the powers of the Lord except His power of creation. (11) " He becomes an overlord. This Ideal Saint has omniscience, omnipotence and bliss. He is the one sovereign ( *Ekarât*), who has sway over all that exists and down to eternity. It is he who enjoys real *Swarājya* - the *Âtmanic* imperishable bliss- as the *Saint of*

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9) Ibid. P. 128. 10 Ibid. P. 162. 11) V. C. T. P. 171.

*Nimbargi* used to say. Thus, the ideal visualised by the ancient *Ṛsis* at the dawn of human history is the Kingdom Immortal (*Amṛtām Purīm*) which transcends the limits of here and now. The modern frantic cries for a League of Nations or United Nations, all aiming at universal brotherhood, are but distant re-echoes of the encompassing oneness of all, tuned in the *Vedic* sing-song, praising the glories of *Theopolity* of the Philosopher-Saint-the very ectype of God." (12)

About this prospective book Sri.Gurudev had remarked "I am going to write a book on *Vedānta*; its last chapter is Future of *Vedānta*. I shall be stating therein that if *Vedânta* did not expound the Philosophy of God-realisation, it would lose all its importance in future. This is my firm opinion."

## Pathway To God :

This is another epoch-making volume designed by the illumined mind of Gurudev as long ago as 1921 or even earlier. Unfortunately it could not take concrete shape even in the form of notes. About this book he has once stated :

"Pathway to God, is the name of a series. The material collected so far is sufficient to bring out five volumes in the series .. After all this, God willing, by making use of all this material the fifth book - Pathway to God in World's Philosophy and Religion - will be prepared. All the earlier books would supply material for the construction of this volume. This series will show how One Religion can reign in the whole world, under the name of Universal Religion."

## Amṛta Mahotsava-Nectar Jubilee :

Sri Gurudev completed his 70th year on 3rd July 1956. His disciples, friends and admirers of Jamkhandi, wished to

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12) Ibid, P. 177.

invite Sri Gurudev on that auspicious occasion to Jamkhandi and pay him their respectful homage by celebrating his *Nectar Jubilee* on a grand scale. But they were diffident as to whether he would allow them to celebrate such a function. Fortunately however, he did not reject their invitation this time. He gladly accepted it and agreed to go to Jamkhandi for the celebration, in spite of his well-known aversion for such functions. His consent not only enabled them to pay their reverential homage to their Master but also gave a splendid opportunity to all other disciples from different parts of India to witness and enjoy this grand celebration, which was fittingly called *Amṛta Mahotsava - Immortal Jubilee*.–Nectar Jubilee. Actually the celebration proved itself to be immortal-a Jubilee never to be forgotten, in the memory of his disciples.

The main function of the Jubilee took place on the 3rd July 1956 in the evening under the Chairmanship of the Chief of Miraj. All the reverential tribute paid to Sri Gurudev issued from loving hearts. The speeches were all marked by emotional exuberance. Thereafter, Sri Gurudev began his benedictory address in *Kannada*. There was pin-drop silence everywhere. He began : " A Guru is one who reveals the hidden form of the Lord. ... A *Guru* realises his identity with the hidden Form of the Lord. " At this stage the loud-speaker suddenly went out of order. So Sri Gurudev was compelled to stop his speech abruptly, which proved to be disappointing to his devotees.

Though this main function had thus an abrupt and unexpected close, it happened to be a precurser of a coming fuller programme which continued with growing enthusiasm for nearly a full month. During that period of his stay at *Râmatirth*, there was a regular *Saptâh*. Sri Gurudev, at that time visited all the important places there with which he and his Master had rich associations. He also initiated several seekers of that place. He thus filled the atmosphere of Jamkhandi with devotion before he left for Nimbal.

## Fury of Prayag :

After his return to Nimbal, Sri Gurudev proceeded with the preparation of his further lectures on " The Pathway to God in *Kannada* Literature " as well as with the writing of his book on fhe *Gita*. He then went to Dharwar in December and delivered three lectures there. Thereafter he left Nimbal on the 12th March for Allahabad and arrived there on the 14th For a week his health was quite all right. But on the 22nd there was a terrible storm with heavy rains and thunder-showers. So he was troubled by severe cough, which did not allow him even to meditate properly.

When the pain became unbearable, he decided to start for Nimbal on the 26th evening by the *Kashi Express*. The Vice-Chancellor and almost all the lecturers of the Allahabad University spontaneously came to the Railway Station as if to pay the last touching farewell to Gurudev.

After a short halt at Poona, he returned to Nimbal. All his disciples thought by his assurances that he would improve as he had improved before. But he had given pre-intimation of his departure to his wife.

## Mahasamadhi :

Thursday the 6th June 1957 was his last day on earth. On that day Sri Gurudev went in his car for meditation on the road to *Incagiri*. He spent about two hours in meditation. After his return from meditation he did not leave his bed. In the evening at about 4 P. M. he intimated his departure to those who were attending on him, by means of signs. And he was completely absorbed in his meditation, awaiting the call from the Lord. He received it at the time of *Bhajan* at night. He suggested to his disciples to perform the Bhajan, which was duly begun in the adjoining *Dhyāna Mandir*. After it was over,

camphor was lit for performing *Ārati*. At about 10-30 P. M. the *Ārati* was over; all the disciples loudly uttered ' *Vithal, Vithal.* ' The flame of camphor expired and just then the flame of Sri Gurudeva's soul left his body and got merged in the Lord.

From the Lord did he come,
To the Lord did he go
Blessed was he blessed he made
Thrice blessed was great Gurudev ?

The funeral rites of Gurudev took place the next day in the evening in front of his new house. A *Nāma Saptāh* was performed for three days. All the disciples of Gurudev from all parts of Bharat had gathered there. On the last day a sapling of *Audumber* was planted at the spot of his cremation. The disciples paid their tearful homage and left Nimbal with a heavy heart.

The last letter written by Sri Gurudev to Srimant Rajasaheb of Sangli, contains his parting Message to all his disciples :

" Our only pursuit should be to follow the will of God and meditate on Him. If we do this, I think, He will come to our help in all circumstances. " ( 1-5-1957 ).

During the last 20 years since the departure of Sri Gurudev, the Ashram at Nimbal, which is named *Sri Gurudev Rānade Āshrām*, has developed a good deal. It is being ably managed by his fair-partner-Smt. Matosri Kakusaheb with the help of some of his senior disciples. A stately, beautiful *Samādhi Mandir* has been erected in the area of his old house and his sacred relics have been deposited in it. A few new rooms have been constructed so as to form a spacious quadrangle in front of the *Mandir* which was later on covered with corrugated

iron sheets. A High School has been started within the precincts of the *Ashram*. Three *Saptāhīs* are celebrated every year:One in the month of Śravana for one month, the second, in *Māgha* for five days, and the third, in *Jyeṣṭha* for five days. It is the *Punyatithi Saptāh* of Sri Gurudev. Several disciples attend them according to their convenience. As none of the disciples of Sri Gurudev could attain his spiritual stature so far, to initiate prospective aspirants a fresh method of initiation through his *Samādhi* has been introduced, which is being taken advantage of, by many aspirants. A *Marāthi* Quarterly entitled " *Satsang*, " is edited and published on behalf of the *Āshram* by his daughter. Smt Vijayadevi Apte M. A.

Like the *Āshram* at Nimbal, the Spiritual Centre of Sri Gurudev, his Intellectual Centre at Belgaum - The Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion-founded by him, has also developed a good deal, during this period. The dream of Sri Gurudev, which twice remained unrealised or partially realised, is being progressively realised, through some of his senior disciples, backed by his Grace, especially through the untiring and zealous efforts of Sri. J. V. Parulekar, the Hon. Secretary of the Academy.

*Chapter V*

# Personality and Message.

## Prelude :

Sri Gurudev was one of the greatest Saint-Philosophers of the modern times. There were Saints who were not Philosophers and there were Philosophers who were not Saints. In Sri Gurudev, there was a rare combination of supreme spiritual illumination as well as a profound philosophic insight. His intellectual and spiritual evolution took place simultaneously. We have seen by now, how he evolved both as an Ideal student and aspirant, as an ideal professor and seeker, as an ideal philosopher and saint, and finally as an ideal Master and Apostle. We have also observed how, as a Master - a *Śadguru*, he initiated the aspirants by granting them Divine Name. how he guided them through his illuminating talks, and trained them in spiritual *Sãdhana*, through common meditation functions. We have also observed how he as an Apostle, spread the Gospel of God-devotion among the people, through his lectures, publications and institutions.

Now we would like to have a glimpse at his Ideal Personality and his Universal message to Humanity.

## Ideal Personality :

i) **A Saint-Philosopher** : Sri Gurudev was primaraly a Saint and then a Philosopher. "He realised the Lord, enjoyed the nectar of His Bliss and carried on the blessed task of distributing it among the disciples till the very end of his life. He maintained that when Bliss is shared with kindred souls, it increases in its intensity. " " There is an in-expressible joy " he said, in partaking of Bliss not merely for oneself, but in the company of those who have been the recipients of a similar Bliss. It is in this manner that the Saints become responsible for the spreading of God's Gospel. " (1)

Sri Gurudeva's life was God-centred, God-inspired, God-possessed and God-intoxicated. " Dr. Ranade has been touched with the Grace of God. We merely talk philosophy while he actually lives it. With Ranade philosophy is the pursuit of wisdom, not a mere intellectual exercise. It is for him meditation on the Spirit, a dedicated way of life. " This tribute of Dr. Radhakrishnan is supremely significant. As pointed out already, " A Mystic may be a philosopher but is not necessarily so. His mystic experience is sufficient for his own elevation into divinity; but if he philosophises, he may raise thinking humanity into a Divine Kingdom of Ends. " (2) Such was the splendid Mission which was entrusted to him by the Lord.

ii) **Denizen of Theopolis** : Sri Gurudev was a lover of humanity. His Universal Brotherhood was based on Divine Brotherhood. Spiritual brotherhood was the root of which universal brotherhood was the fruit. He was always loving the devotees. He always advised his disciples to love the devotees of the Lord, to establish and increase the communities of such

1) B. P. G. P. 269 2) M. M. P. 394

devotees, because that alone would bring about the Kingdom of Peace on earth. " You have to build and thatch the city of God-devotion, give shade and protection to all those who may come to stay in it and live in it yourself. It is a *Theopolis* where God is the Supreme Ruler and all humanity bound together by spiritual tie become equal and aspiring denizens whose only vocation is to fill the world with the praise and glory of the Lord. " (3)

iii) A Composite Picture : The Ideal Personality of Sri Gurudev is fully revealed in the following graphic pictures.

a) Sri Gurudev was a Saint who had conquered hunger and thirst and proved in his life that ' man does not live on bread alone '... He defied bodily ailments and refused medicines and treatment. As Ṛsis of old, he shunned publicity and lived to perfection the teaching ' Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good work and glorify your Father.'

" The Spirit of the Universe encased in a pale ivory frame, and a frail body, mostly skin and bones-he resembled a feathered bird a pair of God-intoxicated eyes, glowing compassionately in their hollowed sockets, situated beneath elevated eyebrows, the symbol of triumph in his life-long Yoga, an extremely affectionate heart, tirelessly pouring out its life-giving nectar, of spiritual wisdom, in warbling words of Divine melody; Gurudev Ranade was a self-sustained angel of the Lord-in brief, God in flesh and blood. " (4)

b) Ranade's spirituality shone clearly through every look, word and act .. Much as I appreciate Ranade's spiritual and intellectual attainments, it is his loving personality which I remember best. Surely, for many, as for me, he was a friend never-to-be-forgotten. For his disciples he was much more. For India he was one of her great men. In India as also in other countries, there are many great scholars, engaged

3) P.G H. P. 294 4) Dr. N. S. Christian.

in various researches, many great philosophers with deep insight into Reality, many great mystics with ineffable visions, many great teachers who inspire their pupils, many great souls whose integrity and personality are radiant. But we seldom see one person who is all of these at once. Such a one was Sri Ranade, one of those rare spirits who shows how fine human nature can be. " (5)

## His Eternal Message :

Attainment of the Vision and Bliss Divine in the life of the individual and of Universal Harmony and Peace in the life of the Society, Nation and the World, has been the Message Eternal of Sri Gurudev. " To realise God for oneself and for others is and should be, " according to him, " the end of human life. " It is those blessed souls who enjoy the Bliss of God-realisation that will be able to bring about Harmony and Peace in the world. " Such God-realisers who enjoy divine bliss, consider it their sacred duty to impart the same to others because of the natural feeling of compassion, as well as of the direct command of the Lord. It thus becomes the mission of such a realiser to spread the gospel of God whenever and wherever it becomes possible for him to do so. One God, One World, One Humanity becomes his maxim, *Theopolity* his doctrine. " (6)

" The problem of the welfare of humanity, " says Sri Gurudev, " would be easily solved, if only a hundred or two genuine God-realisers arise in this world, because spiritual experience alone is the eternal foundation of equality. To the question as to why the mystics do not try to solve the worldly problems, here is my answer. Spiritual energy need not always be active. Because the silent stationary work of the Saints is itself of very great importance. Their spiritual activity is not only useful to them, but it is also useful to the society.

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(5) Prof Burch (U.S.A.) (6) B.P.G. P. 136

Moreover, the attainment of spiritual experience for spreading devotion for the Lord among the people, is itself a very valuable way of helping the world. From this point of view, Saints alone are the real benefactors of mankind." (7) "These God-realisers constitute a blessed community and on account of their intense love for the afflicted humanity, they live only for its benefaction and betterment, proclaiming from Pole to Pole, like a rumbling cloud, the eternal Gospel of God from everlasting to everlasting." (8)

With this background, we can very well imagine the nature of Sri Gurudeva's Message to the different sections of our Society :

To the *Saints* he would implore : " Brothers ! You have been blessed by the Lord, with His Vision and Bliss, along with some of His powers. He has commanded you to spread His devotion among the people. But mind you ! You should not make use of those powers and perform miracles for attracting people towards you. This would be doubly disastrous both to you as well as to the aspirants. It will flatter egoism in you and engender abject credulity in the aspirants. Both these are greatly harmful to spiritual life. Hence, you should try to propagate devotion only through yout pious and noble life as well as through inspiring devotional discourses, and *Bhajans*. This is the most effective method of carrying on your Mission.

To the *Philosophers* he would request : " Brothers ! Yours is an intellectual search for Reality. To achieve even tolerable success in it, you should first rid yourself of all your prejudices and approach it with an open mind. Your Philosophy should not be merely speculative. It should be thoroughly practical. " Its veracity and virulity will entirely depend upon its capacity to make life noble and divine. What

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7) Jalks 8) P. G. K. P. 314

you experience, what you feel and what you realise, that alone should be your Philosophy. " It should never be divorced from life. For that you should take the help of Religion· For Philosophy without Religion would be lame as Religion without Philosophy would be blind. Hence both should receive help from each other and enrich life.

Secondly, you should bear in mind that the " Philosopher's work is not done when he has realised within himself peace of mind. His supreme business is to bring about peace and harmony in the society, the state and the world at large. From this point of view, it may be said, that the future of the world rests with Philosophers. "

To the *Religious Devotees* he would intimate : " Friends ! It is good that you have been worshipping the Lord in your own way. But you should be very careful about the two devils that have got entrance into your field-Superstition on the one hand and Scepticism on the other. The former is unworthy view of God while the latter is denial of God. You should hence try to knock them out. To be able to do that you should approach genuine Saint-Philosophers and seek their guidance. They will grant you a correct conception about the nature of God and devotion. If you sincerely follow their instructions and the discipline prescribed by them, then alone you will make real progress in your spiritual life and not till then.

To the *Moralists* he would advise : " Friends ! You are out to cultivate virtues and eliminate vices... But you should first try to ascertain their real nature. Virtue is that which takes you nearer God and vice is what keeps you away from God. Thus God-devotion happens to be the Central Virtue. If you develop God-devotion, you will be able to cultivate all other virtues very easily. Moreover, you also worship the ideal of Goodness. But you should realise that Goodness really resides in God. Apart from God, it has neither any existence nor any value. Hence God-realisation, through God-devotion

alone will enable you to attain real Goodness.

Hence your Morality should be based on this rational spiritual knowledge and aspire to attain spiritual experience. Moral *Summum Bonum* should merge in Spiritual Summum Bonum. Then alone it will become both stable and perfect.

To the *Artists* he would exhort : " Friends ! The Beauty you are worshipping is a faint reflection of that real Beauty which is present only in God. The so-called beautiful form and colour, the so-called sweet music, fragrance, flavour and touch of the material objects, that you have been loving so far, are but mere unsubstantial shadows, the substances of which are to be found in the spiritual world. So instead of pursuing these fleeting shadows you should try to realise the real substances and give expression to your reactions and experiences in your works of art. Please don't idealise sensual pleasure. The highest ideal of all Art should be the glorification of the Lord and relief of man's estate. " Hence you should try to sponsor the cause of propagating devotion and spiritual bliss and with your consumate skill try to develop a liking for them among the people. Then alone will your Art be helpful for the creation of Peace and Harmony in the world and prove to be a real blessing to Humanity.

To the *Scientists* he would point out : " Friends ! you are engaged in discovering the hidden powers of Nature and trying to harness them to enhance the ease and comfort of human life, for which you richly deserve the grateful goodwishes of humanity. But the infernal engines of destruction you have created, have brought humanity to the brink of total annihilation. In recent times you have exploded the material Atom, released the deadly energy pent up in it, showered a veritable rain of fire on the innocent people, burnt millions, maimed millions for life and brought a veritable Hell on fair Earth. Don't you repent for the infinite misery you have let loose.? Is it not time for you to mend your ways, turn your vision in-

wards, carry on your researches in the spiritual field, try to discover and explode the spiritual Atom– the Spiriton ? Then you will be able to release the blissful energy hidden in it and shower a rain of nectar on the famished people and infuse fresh life in them. You will thus be fortunate enough to bring down the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. Blessed indeed would be the day when you would undertake this Divine Mission.

To the *Sarvodaya Workers* he would exhort : " Friends ! Your ideal of Universal Welfare is really commendable. But please note that it can be fully realised only in *Swarãjya*- in the Kingdom of the Atman or Lord. There God would be the Ruler and God-realisers the subjects. As they are all denizens of the spiritual world, they are all equal. There are no racial, no communal, no national prejudices among them. They earn and give according to their capacity and receive according to their needs. Thev are entirely free from fear, worry and sorrow. Thay enjoy perfect bliss and always try to augment their bliss by sharing it with others. The only struggle that we would observe there is for the attainment of the infinite love and bliss of the Lord. But as everyone is to gain it himself there is no jealousy among them. The experience and the bliss w li issue out from within. " Time and space have nothing to do with the eternal and infinite character of their mystical experience. These together constitute a band of Divine Musicians, each contributing his own note, all together producing a harmony that is wonderful. " (9)

Such is the nature of the *Swarājya* -the Kingdom of God- of my dream. This the Welfare State - the Ideal you are after. Isn't it ?

I have gathered so far, the multicoloured flowers of the

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9 P. G. H. Intiro. P. 2.

Spiritual Garden of Sri Gurudev and have presented a garland to the Lord. I hope and trust that He would be pleased to accept it and bless me with His blissful Vision before He would call me back.

## References with Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| A Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy | - C. S. |
| The Bhagavadgita as a Philosophy of God-realisation | - B. P. G. |
| Mysticism in Maharastra | - M. M. |
| Pathway to God in Hindi Literature. | - P. G. H. |
| Pathway to God in Kannada Literature | - P. G. K. |
| Philosophic and Other Essays | - P. E. |
| Dr. Ranade's Life of Light. | - R. L. L. |

*(II)*

# Elixir for Life

## His Spiritual Talks and Statements

### (1)

### Introductory

" *Sri Gurudeva* Dr. R. D. Ranade, as we have seen already, was very keen on remaining aloof from the external glamour of " *Gurudom* ". He never used to deliver sermons. But he was required to cater to the intellectual needs of his numerous educated disciples, which he did through his instructive and inspiring " Sittings ". His casual talks, at that time, were a sort of intellectual and spiritual treat in which both wit and wisdom had an equal share. It provided a veritable feast of *Bodha Sudhā* - an ambrosia of advice - both about spiritual knowledge and Divine devotion, served along with various dishes suited to the varied tastes of the devotees. The period taken up by these " Sittings " varied from half an hour to three hours or even more. But on account of the variety of items as well as the inspiring presence and talk of *Sri Gurudeva*,

these " Sittings " always proved to be immensely interesting and persons attending them were hardly conscious of the considerable time passed in listening to the talks. "

" As these " Sittings " were of an informal nature, *Sri Gurudeva's* inner thoughts and feelings found spontaneous expression in them. These " Sittings " were not always serious. They were occasionally illumined by flashes of wit, humour and consequent laughter. Thus the spiritual talks at such " Sittings " generated love for spiritual life in the aspirants, fortified their faith by removing indirectly their misgivings and misconceptions, supplied them with fresh inspiration to pursue steadily their spiritual *Sãdhana*, by granting them the necessary light. "

Some of his disciples have taken brief notes of some of these talks. We intend to share a few important talks with the readers. They are expected to serve as good beacon-lights and *elixirs* during their spiritual career. As the disciples who have recorded them, as well as those who have taken part in the talks, prefer not to reveal their identity, their names have not been mentioned. No ideological sequence has been followed in the arrangement of these talks in this series. They have been given in the order in which they have been recorded. These records extend from 1936 onwards. The original *Marathi* and *Kannada* talks have been freely rendered into English for the benefit of the English-knowing readers.

## (2)
## ' Sarvam khalu idam Brahma '

( All this is verily the Absolute )

One day a disciple, in one of the " Sittings " asked *Sri Gurudeva* : " Sir, some scholars maintain that since the whole universe is nothing but the Absolute, all our actions in this world partake of the nature of *Brahman*. Naturally, *Brahman*

can be automatically realised through the intellectual apprehension of its real nature. What need is there, then, they ask, of repairing. to the forest and performing *Tapas* there ? How far is this view correct ?"

" This is wrong ! " declared *Sri Gurudeva*. " Look here " he continued, " *Srvaṁ khalu idam Brahma* is the verbal expression of the ultimate spiritual experience. We should not try to build a logical edifice on its basis. Ours is an Inductive Method. not a Deductive one, at all. What little spiritual experience we are blessed with, should itself gradually evolve and culminate in that grand, final experience. Logical theory can neither serve as an experience nor can it be used as a *Sādhana*.

Moreover, mere intellectual knowledge of Reality, is totally different from its mystical realisation. One can not, hence, be a substitute for the other. At the same time, simple intellectual apprehension of Reality will never lead one to actual spiritual experience. Thus it can neithar be an end, nor a means of God-realisation. At the most, it can serve as a minor aid to it. "

## (3)
## Supremacy of Spiritual Life

A young man from Hubli had been once to *Sri Gurudeva* for being initiated by him. He was a *Brahmacāri* and had taken an active part in the Non-cooperation movement for about 5 or 6 years. He had some jail-experience also to his credit. He intimated all this to *Sri Gurudeva* and expressed his desire to receive initiation from him. He wanted to carry on spiritual *Sādhana* also along with his political activities. While introducing this young man to us *Sri Gurudeva* said : " This gentleman is a political worker. He has started and is conducting a *Vyāyāma Śālā* in a village and is also engaged in political activities. Now he is desirous of leading a spiritual

life as well. But as political life and spiritual life are entirely opposed to each other, like darkness and light, how would it be possible for him, to live both at the same time ? He will have to choose one of them. "

Unable to come to a definite decision regarding his final choice, the young man politely took his leave. When he departed from the room, *Sri Gurudeva* said " This young man wanted to develop spiritual power to promote his political aspirations. That desire had brought him here. But spiritual life must be sought and cultivated as an end in itself and never as a means to achieve other ends. Then alone we would attain our cherished goal viz. God-realisation. Otherwise, not. Tnis young man appears to be good-natured. But some more time is needed for him to enter spiritual field. "

## (4)
## Love for Spiritual Life

A seeker once asked *Sri Gurudeva* : " Sir ! how should we awaken and intensify our love for spiritual life ?" *Sri Gurudeva* replied : To awaken and intensify our love for spiritual life, we should try to keep good company ( *Satsaṇga* ) — the holy company of saints and seekers. There is no means so simole and effective as that. It would ensure our steady progress on the spiritual path. Along with this, good-listening ( *Satsravaṇa* ), listening to spiritual discourses. is also absolutely necessary. But we should listen with perfect attention, with complete concentration. In fact, we should be fully absorbed in listening and should not be conscious of anything else at that time. Reading is also included in listening. We should always employ meditative method in reading. It does not matter even if we read only a few verses at a time. But ours should be a meditative reading. We should reflect while we read. The idea should sink in our mind. It is no use simply skipping over pages after pages. In spiritual *Sādhana*, meditative reading proves to be very valuable and effective.

While reading we should also try to remember the Name of the Lord. That would certainly enhance the utility of reading. All these factors would create a devotional atmosphere round about us that would ultimately awaken and intensify our love for spiritual life. "

## (5)
## Nāmasmaraṇa

( Meditation on the Name Divine )

" Are the four popular *Yogas* viz. the *Jñânayoga*-the Yoga of Knowledge,the *Karmayoga*-the Yoga of action, the *Dhyânayoga*-the Yoga of Meditation, and the *Bhaktiyoga*-the Yoga of Devotion,independent paths leading to God-realisation?If so,how do they enable the aspirant to attain Divinity ? " This was the question posed in one of the " Sittings " when *Sri Gurudeva* remarked : " These *Yogas* are not only not independent paths, but they are not at all paths directly leading to Divinity. Left to themselves, they will not get even an entrance into the sacred Shrine of Divinity. They can, at the most, reach its portals. The *Yoga* of *Nāmasmaraṇa* is the only path that can enable the *Sādhaka* to attain God-head. This path alone can take the *Sadhâka* into the inner Sanctuary and grant him the vision and bliss of Divinity. *Nanyaḥ panthā vidyate ayanāya* - ' there is no other way for it.' All the saints of the world have followed the same Pathway, and have bequeathed it to the coming aspirants.

The Yogas of Knowledge, Action and Devotion, are contributory to *Nāmasmaraṇa*. They cleanse our hearts, fortify our faith, remove our intellectual doubts, and facilitate our journey along the Pathway. That is all that they can do. On account of the temperamental differences, the *Sādhakas* begin their *Sādhana*, by adopting one or the other of these *Yogas* that suits their temper most. But, in the long run,they must necessarily take recourse to the primary Pathway of *Nāmasmarana*. Otherwise, they won't attain their ideal of God-

realisation. Thus, meditation on the Name Divine is the only Pathway to God. This is the Pathway advocated by Saints like *Jñāneśvara.*"

(6)

## Power of Divine Name

Once the method of meditation on the Divine Name was the topic of discussion. Some of the aspirants, assembled on that day, wanted to know whether all the factors in the method, were equally important and inevitable.. *Sri Gurudeva* explaind : " Fixing of the gaze on the tip of the nose, observation of the incoming and outgoing breath, mental repetition of the Name along with the breath distinctly.– all these are, no doubt, important factors in our process of meditation. They are all, really, very useful for our mental concentration. But with all that, if the Name has not been imparted by a *Sadguru* possessing the requisite spiritual attainments, it would never enable a seeker to attain spiritual realisation. The power of the Name rests in the *Tapas-Sādhana* and spiritual realisation of the *Sadguru*. The grace and power of the Lord descends into the Name through the *Sadguru*. We may meditate on the Name imparted by such a *Sadguru* in any way we like. It would not fail to grant the desired fruit of God-vision.

Don't you know that *Sri Bābā* used to meditate with his eyes closed ? I also do the same. On account of biliousness, continuous gaze on the nose-tip produced rings before our eyes. Hence we began to meditate with our eyes closed. But it should be noted that this does not apply to one and all."

## (7)

## Spiritual " Vastu ۞" is Unique

" A spiritual " Vastu " is visible as all other objects are visible. What, then, is the distinction between the visions of them both? Why should one be regarded as an expression of Reality and not the other ?" When this question was asked one day, *Srī Gurudeva* explained: There is a vast difference between the vision of " *Vastu* " and that of other objects. The former is produced within, while the latter is produced without. One is internal, while the other is external. External vision requires an object. Such vision is possible only when the object is present and not possible when it is absent This is not the case with internal vision. The " *Vastu* " is first created internally and then it becomes visible to the external organs of sight.

Nor is this all. In both these types of vision, the physiological processes also are quite different. For the sight of an external object, light is required; eyes must be in a normal. healthy condition; and at the same time. tney must be open. But for the vision of " *Vastu,* " none of these factors are necessary. " *Vastu* " can be seen even in darkness. It can be seen even when the eyes are closed and by the blind man as well. You know our spiritual brother *Sri Lingappa Savalgi*, He was blind by one eye. But he could see the " *Vastu* " even with his blind eye. This is really a fine test of the reality of " *Vastu* ".

" *Yad dṛṣtaṁ tan naṣṭam* "– " That which is visible is perishable ! " This is a well-known maxim. It is a truism so far as external objects are concerned. But it is not true in the case of spiritual " *Vastu.* " A gentleman who did not know this distinction had once asked *Śrī Bābā* this very question. It was, of course, an outcome of his utter ignorance in this respect.

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۞ Supersensuous perception of spiritual light, form sound, touch, fragrance and taste is called " Vastu " by the Saints.

Western physiologists have recently propounded a new theory. They maintain that the whole brain sees, hears and thinks. According to them, every cell of the brain sees. Sight is not the function of the one particular centre. Hence it is not impossible to see with the ear and hear with the eye. *Jñaneśvara's* utterance in this respect is quite well-known: " I heard with the eyes and saw with the ears etc. "

## (8)
## Attractive Power of " Vastu "

" When will our " *Vastu* " develop the power of attracting us ? " asked an aspirant. Śrī *Gurudeva* replied : Our *Vāstu* does possess the power of attraction from the very start, as it is inherent in the " *Vastu.* " We fail to realise the power in the beginning on account of our mental impurity. As soon as our heart gets purified, it begins to realise and appreciate the attraction and to respond to it properly. Between the two types of " *Vastu* " spiritual sound is more absorbing than spiritual sight. Śri Śaṅkara has paid a high tribute to this sound, in his *Yoga-taravali*, in these glowing terms:

नादानुसन्धान नमोऽस्तु तुभ्यं
त्वां साधनं तत्त्वपदस्य जाने ।
भवत्प्रसादात् पवनेन सार्कं
विलीयते विष्णुपदे मनो मे ।।

" Salutations to Thee ! O Sound-attunement ! I know that you are the means of attaining Reality. Through your grace, my mind is absorbed at the feet of the Lord, along with the breath. " Addressing this very sound, Śrī *Tukārām* says : Just as the pipe of a snake - charmer attracts and charms the serpent, you have charmed and overpowered me. " Such is its inherent power of attraction.

On another occasion, when a disciple complained about his loss of interest in spiritual life as well as lack of attraction in his *Vastu*. Srī Gurudeva remarked: " Religion, it is said, is an instinct like hunger and sex. At times, spiritual hunger overpowers us. Then we spontaneously feel impelled to sit for meditation. After good meditation, it gradually subsides. But this spiritual hunger, though naturally present in all, is dormant in some and dominant in others, less intense in some and more intense in others. How to make it more intense is a problem. When our "*Vastu*" becomes permanent, through good *Sâdhana*, this hunger becomes intense Tnis won't be possible merely through occasional glimpses of " *Vastu* ". " *Vastu* " should become an important factor in life-a veritable part and parcel of our life. Then alone we will enter into its field of attraction and when this is once achieved. future progress becomes easy and rapid. Then there would be no danger of the flagging of our interest. Till then we must be particularly careful.

## (9)
## God-realisation and Omnipotence.

" A saint who has realised God, is supposed to possess infinite power Is it really so, Sir ! " asked a disciple. " Yes ! Of course ! " emphatically replied *Srî Gurudeva* " It is definitely real God is the eternal spring of infinite power. Naturally, those who partake of its nectarian waters, share His power. ' A genuine saint' according to *Srī Rāmadāsa*, ' actually experiences that all his sins have come to an end, that the round of births and deaths has come to stop, that he has realised both God and Self and that he has completely surrendered his Self to God. "

This being the case, such a saint can confidently declare: ' I am the child of the Lord. What is there in the world that I cannot achieve ? ' If a saint does not possess this confidence, he is not a God-realiser at all. A saint is ever free from fear of any kind. as he is thoroughly convinced, through actual experience, that his " *Vastu* " would never fail to protect him

आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् न विभेति कदाचन । ..... कुतश्चन । declare the *Upaniṣads*. A saint who has realised the bliss of *Brahman*, will never be afraid of anything or anybody. "

But this does not mean that he can make two plus two equal to five. God always obeys His laws. He never transgresses them, even though He can do so. He designs different bodies to fulfil different purposes. Hence, in addition to the common function of spreading the Gospel of God-devotion among the people, these saints can perform only that work for which their bodies have been specially designed. They cannot do anything else.

## (10)
## Nature of Miracles

" What is the exact nature of miracles ? How do they take place ? " were the questions asked by a visitor to *Sri Gurudeva*, when he explained : " Look here ! It is the law of Nature that cause and effect should necessarily precede and follow each other. Every cause should produce an effect and every effect should have a cause. If a few links in this chain are absent-invisible, that phenomena is treated as a miracle. Such miracles do happen very often. The Radio of today is a miracle of yesterday. With the aid of the super-natural power acquired through penance, saints transcend a few steps, and at once reach the top. These sudden jumps, are then regarded as miracles by the common people.

There is another type of miracles with which we are familiar. We may call them ' Psychological Miracles. ' Saints possessing supernatural powers, can send messages to their distant disciples instantly, can intimate them beforehand the events that would take place in future, and can actually read the thoughts of others as well. All these things are possible. But *Sri Mahārāj* maintained that events that violate the laws of Nature, such as ' the speech of a buffalo ' and ' the

movement of a wall' cannot take place. Hence, these miracles attributed to *Saint Jñāneśvara*, might be regarded as the products of poetic imagination.

In this connection, one fact deserves special attention. Miracles should happen of their own accord; they should never be wilfully performed. Divine grace should descend. It is always received and never given. Because, the moment the idea of giving it, dawns upon the saint, he enters the province of Ego, by transcending that of the Lord. Genuine saints, therefore, never entertain even the thought of performing miracles. Still, it is also equally true that God brings about miracles, through the saints, without their knowledge."

## (11)
## No sequence in the Spiritual Experience

The nature of spiritual experience was once the topic of discussion. "Sir ! There is rich variety in the spiritual experiences of various saints. The order in which the saints had them, also appears to be different. Why should it be so ? Is there no definite sequence in them ? " asked a disciple. Sri Gurudev replied : "No ! There is no fixed sequence at all. Every *Sādhaka* has his own peculiar order of having these experiences. Let us just observe the experiences of the saints of our own *Sampradāya*. What do we find there ? *Sri Nimbargi Maharaj*, *Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj*, *Sri Baba*, *Smt. Sivalingavva*-all these had their experiences in different order. This doesn't mean, that there was no similarity between them. But on account of their temperamental differences, there was difference in the emphasis of each of them. That is all.

When we consider this problem we are apt to commit another mistake. Till recently, it was a current belief that spiritual evolution was unilinear. But it is not so. Modern thinkers like Alexander and others maintain that spiritual evolution is multilinear. And they are quite correct. When a

bomb-shell explodes, its splinters fly in all directions all at once. Similar is the case with spiritual experience. A seeker gets these exoeriences all at once. Hence the question of sequence in them becomes absolutely irrelevent. In fact it does not arise at all."

## (12)
## Morality and Mysticism.

One day, a *Kannada* song was being sung in the "Sitting" which described the experience of Spiritual Sound and its effects on the *Sādhak*. It contained a line in which the poet-saint stated : "As soon as I began to hear the Sound, all my vices vanished automatically." While explaining the significance of this line *Sri Gurudev* dealt with the close relation between Morality and Mysticism. He remarked "Morality and Mysticism are very intimately related. In fact, they are interdependant. Morality leads to and supports Mysticism. while Mysticism brings about perfection in Morality. Just look at our vices ! They are the products of our inordinate attachment to sense-pleasure and sense-objects. Morality aspires to free us from this attachment by teaching us to control our senses and mind. It, thus, induces and enables us to cultivate the virtues gradually and leads us to the supreme virtue of God-devotion. But as the *Gitā* tells us : "Sense-objects turn away from him who does not enjoy them with his senses, but the relish for them persists. This relish also disappears only after he has the vision of the Supreme."

Thus, unless we are morally pure we cannot make any progress in our spiritual life and realise God. And unless we realise God, we cannot be perfect in our moral life. Apparently this is a paradox. Of all aspects of morality, the mystical aspect alone is of utmost importance. In fact, we may say that, that which conduces to mystical elevation is alone moral. All other things are not really moral. We may very well define morality in these words."

## (13)
## Who can Fathom the Depth of Divinity?

It was about eight in the morning. *Sri Gurudeva* was conversing with the aspirants as usual. When the conversation was going on, *Sri Gurudeva* suddenly asked *Nagappa*- the grandson of *Sri Nimbargi Maharaj*, who was present there, to sing the Kannada song " *Guruve nimmâjneyanu* " As the song was being sung by *Nagappa* in his sonorous voice, *Sri Gurudeva* was listening to it with rapt attention. There was pindrop silence among the audience. All at once, *Sri Gurudeva* broke the silence with this remark : " Look here ? यस्यान्तन्नविदु: सुरासुरगणा:" Even the gods and demons could not fathom the depth of Divinity. What of man- a puny creature ? Why should he vainly boast of his knowledge ? Who is there that can say that he has realised God completely? Here and there we come across a few persons who have attained only a particle or two of this Infinite Treasure. Why should a man, then, be unnecessarily elated with this tiny attainment ?

The devotees of God are born in all countries right from ancient times. Every country has been blessed with their holy presence. from time to time. Devotion is not, thus, the exclusive monopoly of any one land or community. Still, vainly do people fight in the name of religion. In fact, spiritual life is the only province that deserves to be free from fight of any kind. Is it not strange, then, that this province also should be the hot-bed of fierce fight ? To be frank, these fights are not really religious: they are essentially political People fight their political battles in the name of religion. "

## (14)
## Philosophy and Mysticism

*Sri Gurudeva* was once explaining the need of the study of philosophy in this scientific age, in the course of

which he remarked : "We are now required to face the Western Scholars and put up a fight with them. Hence we should also be adept in the use of the weapons handled by them. If we are called upon to argue with a lawyer, is it not necessary for us to study law ? Therefore a study of philosohy has become necessary now. Really, it is not essential for Mysticism. But philosophical justification for mystical life is demanded by the modern mind; unfortunately, we find that our mystics are innocent of philosophy and philosophers are not interested in Mysticism. Is it not a matter of regret that even the students studying philosophy under my guidance should not realise the supreme value of mysticism ? But it is a fact that cannot be denied.

Secondly, it should also be noted that philosophy is a fence that does not allow the stray cattle of superstition to enter into the garden of mysticism."

## (15)
## Experience of Void or Spacelessness

Once a *Kannada* song was being read out to *Gurudeva*. It contained this line : "*Oñkâra śabdavu sūnyavâgide* " meaning " the word Om has disappeared in the Void." This line had another reading viz. " *Oñkâra śabdavu sūnyavâgade.*"which meant, " the word Om did not disappear in the Void. ". Now which of the two readings was correct? When this problem was being discussed, *Sri Gurudeva* said : "Some people believe and maintain that as a *Sâdhaka* advances in his spiritual career, his spiritual experiences of Sound and Form ultimately disappear and he experiences only a Void. This is a peculiar view advocated by the *Hata-Yoga-Pradīpikā*. Wnen this was brought to my notice, I referred the matter to *Sri Bhāusâheb Maharaj* and sought his opinion about its correctness. I discussed this problem with *Sri Bâba* as well. Both of them emphatically maintained : These experiences do not disappear at all. They simply temporarily move aside, when we get the experience of Spacelessness.

## (16)
## The Seat of the Soul

An aspirant once asked *Sri Gurudeva* : " Sir, some saints maintain that our Soul resides in the right side of our heart. What is your opinion about it ? " *Sri Gurudeva* replied, " It is true that there are a few passages in the *Upanisads* expressing that the heart is the seat of the Soul. अंगुष्टमात्रः पुरुषः मध्य आत्मनि तिष्ठति । " The Soul of the size of a thumb, resides in the heart," says the *Kathopanisad*. अहं हृदि सन्निविष्ठः — " I reside in the heart, " declares the *Gita*. But modern physiologists have conclusively proved that the brain is the seat of the Soul. The Soul resides in the Pituitary Gland. The heart has been granted only Provincial Autonomy. It can enjoy limited freedom, given to it by the brain. It cannot transcend it. "

## (17)
## Devotion should spring up.

One day, when the usual sitting was going on, a disciple asked : " Sir ! We are very often told that *Bindu* ( Spiritual Atom ) is one of the forms of Divinity. Why then, do we not feel devotion and reverence for it ? What should be done to develop that feeling about it ? " *Sri Gurudeva* explained : " Look here, the feeling of devotion should naturally well up in the heart, as a result of deep meditation and higher spiritual experiences. It should never be worked up. Don't you remember *Sri Baba's Vachana viz Bindu tithe Sindhu*- " where there is a drop, there is ocean. " The drop is a part and parcel of the ocean. In philosophy we speak of ' Qualitative Monism ' and ' Numerical Pluralism. ' From the point of view of quality there is identity between a *Bindu and Sindhu*: but from that of quantity or number, there is difference between them. Is there any qualitative difference between a lump of boiled-rice

and its grain ? But as that lump does contain a number of grains, there is difference in quantity. We must admit that. Isn't it ?

At the same time, it must be noted that there is a striking difference between a *Bindu* and a grain of boiled rice. While a *Bindu* can produce various forms of Divinity, a grain cannot produce boiled rice at all.

## (18)
## Nature of Spiritual Energy.

When a disciple asked *Sri Gurudeva* one day, about the nature of Spiritual Energy, he explained : " We know this much that Spiritual Energy is infinite and eternal and that the whole universe arises from it and dissolves in it We cannot, however, ascertain why the universe comes out of it and merges in it. Meditation on the Name Divine is the only means of generating. developing and stabilising that Energy in us. This Spiritual Energy, *Atman*, Absolute, God, Divinity, are one and the same. When this Energy is generated, it affects the centres of perception in our brain, as a result of which we get the supersensuous experiences of *Nāda* ( sound ), *Bindu* ( form ) and *Kalā* ( light ) etc. This Spiritual Energy, when generated, also produces in us such emotions as love, compassion, modesty, dispassion, wonder, terror and bliss. The compassion and dispassion, produced as a result of the growth of this Energy, would alone be stable and enduring. Hence real dispassion, desirelessness and fearlessness, would be possible only when spiritual experiences develop. Self-effort alone cannot achieve them. However, as these virtues are contributory to spiritual experience, we should try to cultivate them. But their perfection can be achieved only by intense *Nāmasmaraṇa*.

## (19)
## Company of Saints and Sages

*Sri Gurudeva* had implicit faith in the need and efficacy of the company of Saints and *Sādhakas*. "No *Sādhana* is possible in the absence of such a company," was his special injunction to all the *Sādhakās*. He always advised them to seek such holy company. In this connection, he once related an incident in his personal life: "As advised by *Sri Maharaj*, I used to perform *Sādhana* for seven hours every day. But one day I was surprised to hear him remark: 'What can mere *Sādhana* achieve? Good company is needed.' Unable to make out the full implication of this remark, I sought the guidance of a senior *Sādhaka* in this respect, who told me that I should try to stay in the company of *Sri Maharaj* as much as possible. Thereafter I began to accompany *Sri Maharaj* during his spiritual tours whenever I could get an opportunity. Thus I tried to reap the maximum benefit of his inspiring holy company from 1910 to 1914 And after *Sri Mahārāj* attained *Samādhi* in 1914, I took advantage of the company of *Sri Babu* and received inspiration from him."

## (20)
## Progress in Spiritual Life

Once there was a discussion about the nature of progress in spiritual life, when *Sri Gurudeva* explained: "Look here. The Spiritual Pathway is not straight. It is zig-zag; it is spiral. Hence our progress along the Path is bound to be spiral: When we are proceeding along the winding path, we have, at times, the unique pleasure of having a glimpse of the beautiful scenery ahead. Just then, our path takes a turn and the scene goes out of sight, which gives us a good deal of pain. Still, it does leave a faint memory of it, which enables us to maintain our effort to reach the spot-to

have the vision of the scene once again. In this way, such occasional glimpses inspire and goad us onwards till we attain our highest goal."

## (21)

## Quality of our Meditation.

" How to judge the quality of our meditation ? " was the question asked by a *Śadhaka* when *Sri Gurudeva* replied : "Really we should be our own judges of the quality of our meditation. It is in proportion to the bliss we enjoy in meditation, as compared with the standard bliss of which there is an undefined and unconscious standard in our heart. Usually, we get a fraction of it-- a very small fraction. Only rarely is the standard 60 ·/. or even greater is reached. " *Ānandasya mātrāṁ upajīvanti.* " The degree of bliss, however, does not depend upon the expansion of our experience; it depends upon its quality. "

## (22)

## When is Spiritual Progress Possible ?

There was once a discussion about the circumstances favourable for spiritual progress, when *Sri Gurudeva* remarked: " For a devotee, his spiritual progress is of the highest value. Nothing else counts for him as much - not even the freedom of his country. For spiritual progress, peace or *status quo* is chiefly needed and not revolutionary conditions. There is sometimes sudden and great progress in distracted conditions, no doubt. But that is temporary, not permanent. Permanent progress is possible during peace only. The experiences received during distracted conditions, do not re-appear for years thereafter. "

## (23)
## Emotion and Reason

" What is the place of emotion and reason in the spiritual *Sādhana* ?" asked a seeker one day, to which *Sri Gurudeva* replied: " For being able to perform our *Sâdhana* successfully, both emotion and reason are necessary. But excess of emotion, not supported and balanced by reason, is not good. Emotion is the petrol; no doubt, but reason is the steering wheel. One takes to meditation when emotion is strong, but forgets it when the emotion runs down. So, emotion must be supported by reason, if at all we are to reap the full benefit from it in our *Sādhana*. "

## (24)
## Meditation and Physical Pain

" Meditation is possible, " remarked *Sri Gurudeva* one day, "so long as physical pain is endurable. But when it goes beyond endurance, meditation becomes impossible. So, we should carry on our meditation so long as health is good enough for that. And at the same time, we must pray God that when pain gets beyond endurance, He should, by His grace, keep His memory alive in our mind. There is no other remedy to remember God, in excessive physical pain. *Sri Bâbâ* appears to have conquered pain, as could be seen at the time of his demise. "

## (25)
## Hypothetical Faith is Sufficient.

*Prof. A* had specially come to discuss certain problems with *Gurudeva* and get his doubts cleared. He had a long discussion with *Sri Gurudeva*. The gist of some of the most important problems discussed, has been given here.

At the outset *Prof. A* referred to the *Marathi* song विडा घ्याहो नारायणा, which he had heard the previous night at the time of the *Bhajan*, and remarked: " Sir, I don't understand the significance of विडा etc I don't believe in them. What have they to do with spiritual life ? Moreover . . " Before he could proceed with his criticism, *Sri Gurudeva* suddenly intervened and said : " Well ! You need not believe in them. It is not at all necessary. You may even consider them to be pure superstitions. That does not matter in the least. In spiritual life hypothetical belief is quite sufficient. Mind you ! Such a belief will not be a leap in the dark. The power, once communicated to you, by the Spiritual teacher, will lead you on, to infinite progress. It does not require any further help of any kind. The progress will not be merely arithmetical; it will be super-mathematical. "

"Progress in spiritual life is of two types : One is slow and cumulative and the other is quick and sudden. One is called पिपीलिकामार्ग or ( Ant's way ), while the other is called विहंगम-मार्ग or ( Bird's way ). If we are once in posession of the aeroplane of *Nāma* that carries with it Divine Power, we may rise to any height. The Divine Grace received through our intense *Sādhana* of *Nāma-smaraṇa* or meditation on *Nāma*, would definitely ensure rapid progress. "

" That which we actually experience and realise, should alone be treated as real. You need not believe even in the *Avatārs* of *Rama* and *Krisna* and others. You may very well consider them to be merely mythical persons, not even historical personalities. Even Saint *Rāmadās* has treated them to be inferior to God. Says he:

राम तो कालचा । सुत दशरथाचा ।
अनंत-युगाचा । आत्माराम ।।

" *Rāma*, the son of *Daśaratha*, belongs only to the recent past. But the *Ātman* belongs to eternity. "

" We should steadily perform our *Sādhana* and get spiritual experiences ourselves. We should accept that form of God to be real of which we have got an actual vision. We should enkindle the Divine Lamp within us. Then His light would automatically radiate in all directions. If the flower blooms. its fragrance would spread far and wide of its own accord. God is blissful. Spiritual life begins, with the experience of at least an iota of that Bliss "

## (26)
## Spiritual Bliss

Next *Prof A* wanted to know about the nature of Spiritual Bliss, when *Sri Gurudeva* explained : " We get beatific experience through the brain. There are three types of stimuli : i) Physical ii) Mental and iii) Spiritual. The difference is in the source of the stimuli. Spiritual Bliss springs up from within. like a fountain, all of a sudden, We have to adjust our brain to the internal stimuli. Nay. the brain is to obey its call. The brain is, thus, a fortunate instrument as it receives the spiritual beatific experience.

Let us take the example of *Anāhat* Sound. Here the tempanium is sounded from within. When we begin to have this experience, the external stimuli are barred. They don't affect the ear at all. And when the internal sound intensifies the *Sādhaka* cannot hear the external one.

At this stage, *Prof A.* asked : " What is the nature of *Samādhi*, Sir ? " *Sri Gurudeva* replied : " The so-called *Samādhi* is a mere mental attunement with God. Our beatific experience is far beyond that state. Then you merge in God entirely. In that state, the *Sādhaka* becomes one with God. There is assimilation at that time. "

" *Sri Śankarācārya* maintains that *Samādhi* itself is God. " सम्यक् आधीयते चित्तं यस्मिन् स देव: । " " *Samādhi* is God in whom our mind is entirely assimilated. " But we must enjoy the experience of bliss. Then alone can we call it *Samādhi.* "

*Patanjali* says : " योग: चित्तवृत्तिनिरोध : । तदा द्रष्टु: स्वरूपेऽवस्थानम् । वृत्तिसारूप्यमितरत्र । "— *Yoga* is the cessation of mental modifications. In *Yoga*, the Seer (Soul) is indentified with his original form. At other times, he assumes the form of the वृत्तीs ( mental modifications ). " As Spiritual Bliss is not an emotion, it does not vanish, even when all the emotions vanish. Being an essential attribute of God, nay—being identical with God Himself, it continues to exist for ever. "

" Some scholars maintain that we must transcend the five *Kośâs* and reach the state of *Nirânanda* - non bliss. This is merely a theory. The state of *Brahma-nirvâna* of the Gita includes both *Ânanda* and *Nirânanda.* It means beatification and not annihilation. It is not *Buddhistic* or *Nihilistic* negative peace. It is positive beatification. To us Bliss is the real entity. We cannot say anything about any state beyond that. "

## (27)
## God's Grace Saved India

Next day the conversation began with a question by *Prof. A.* regarding the then political situation of India (1944). *Sri Gurudev* remarked : " The burning power of war, has now grown so fierce that it is no use talking of independence at such a time. Even though we somehow got independence, the big powers surrounding our country, that are hourly waiting to pounce upon us, will easily snatch our independence in no time. Our people fly away helter-skelter, when a single bomb

explodes somewhere. They are so panicky. They are not able to protect themselves in any way. In this respect no nation in the world is so helpless as India."

Recently Japan would have created terrible havoc here, in the twinkling of an eye. But the grace of the Saints in our country, saved us as we are destined to play a prominent part in bringing about peace in the world, after this war is over. It is because '*Do Little*" flew from China and bombed Tokio that the calamity mentioned above was averted. Thus really '*Do-Little*' proved himself to be '*Do Great*.' The Almighty prompted him to take that step and saved India. God's ways are, indeed, unfathomable. We cannot divine the means by which He achieves His object. We know how, as the story goes, God saved the bird, both from the hunter as well as from the hawk. He made a snake bite the hunter, as a result of which his arrow missed the aim and killed the hawk, instead. The hunter also died of snakebite. And thus the bird was saved. If *Do Little* had not bombed Tokio India would have been reduced to ashes by the Japanese bombers. A nation that sent the invincible warships like ' Prince of Wales ' and ' Repulse ' to the bottom of the ocean within a short time, would have easily showered a rain of fire, over India and burnt it in no time.

You should seek independence when you deserve it. What is the testimony of history? We are quarelling with our own people like hogs and dogs. Under these circumstances, we should lay the foundation of physical glory coming out of spiritual glory. I am stating this merely with the help of historical logic. I cannot say when such a time would come. The logic of history requires us to fulfil one of these conditions before we can deserve independence.

i) The quarrel between Hindus and Muslims must be ended somehow.

ii) We must achieve scientific development superior to both America and Germany, which is rather impossible.

iii) We must rise to such a spiritual height that we must realise that all humanity is one.

It is the fond belief of some people that we can get independence with the help of Russia. That is impossible. Russia is a great—. He has evil designs on India. In fact, every strong nation has such a design. Russian affection is like that of boa. We cannot say when he would devour us.

## (28)
## Visions about the Future

"Can we have visions about the future events?" asked *Prof A. Sri Gurudeva* replied : "We may have such visions. *Sri Krishna* had such visions at the time of *Mahābhārata*. When *Arjuna* expressed his doubt regarding their victory in the great war, *Sri Krishna* warned him. 'I have slain them already. Fight and you will gain victory.' Let us seek for such visions. Let us wait for such visions. You should not merely imagine them".

"In fact, we would be able to know the future in case we realise and assimilate the Spiritual Principle through intense God-devotion. It is through the power of this Spiritual Principle that *Saint Rāmadās* could have such visions Thus does he describe one such vision. 'The Mother Goddess has come with a bludgeon in her hand and has killed the sinners of old in the Region of Bliss. I see the Goddess walking in the company of the King, intent upon devouring the wicked and the sinners.' It all depends upon the fervour of our devotion to God. What is impossible for God's Grace?

The breaking of one Spiritual Atom will convert the whole world. We shoud attain that Power which rules the world. Even a single individual possessing that power is enough. *Duryodhana* asked *Sri Krishna* to give him his army but *Arjuna* implored him to grant him his personal presence. Where God is present victory is bound to be there. Hence *Arjuna* attained victory. Really God alone is quite sufficient for the achievement of our object.

We should, therefore, try to seek the Ultimate Reality. We should not merely try to imagine the design of the Lord. We should try to seek it. Then we shall know His Will, even about the future. Future flashes would surely dawn upon us in course of time, though not all at once.

## (29)
## Spiritual Life and Self-Surrender

" Spiritual life " remarked *Sri Gurudeo*, " consists in realising what this Spiritual Power is and in assimilating it. Real self-surrender is not possible unless we realise this Power. You can see the Power definitely. " अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे । " I was overjoyed to see the Power never seen before, and was also overpowered with fear. " says *Arjūna*. Spiritual life is a mixture of both joy and fear. Self-consciousness dies, after realising this Power, and the feeling of fear brings about surrender. If you feel terribly afraid that you cannot lift up your hand without His Power, you will surrender everything to Him "

## (30)
## The Chakras and Kundalini

Once *Sri Gurudeo* was explaining the nature of *Chakrâs* and *Kundalini* to Dr. K. of Bombay. He said: " *Yoga* describes

six *Chakras*, *Kundalini*, oozing of Nectar etc. We should study this subject in a scientific spirit and in a dispassionate manner. Modern physiologists admit the existence of six Plexuses in the body. These appear to be the six *Chakras*. Of these Naval and Cardiac Plexuses do really exist in the form of glands. The existence of *Sahasradal Chakra* is yet problematic. *Kundalini* has no physical existence. Its description as a serpant occuring in *Jnāneśvari* is merely poetic.

*Kundalini* is a power contained in the fluid of the spinal column. When that liquid power becomes patent - when it is invested with energy - it rises up and reaches the *Thalamus* called the *Sahasradal Chakra* - the thousand - petalled Lotus and begins to trickle. This might be the flow of Nectar *Thalamus* possesses the controls of all the nerve-centres. When particular nerves are brought under control, one becomes able to stop heart-beats and pulse-beats. Reflex nerves also are brought under control like the ordinary nerves.

## (31)
## Hypnotism and Mystical Experience

*Dr. K* the then Civil Surgeon of Bijapur once asked *Sri Gurudeo* to point out the distinction between hypnotism and mystical experience when *Sri Gurudeo* explained : " Hypnotism is dangerous both to the hypnotist as well as to his ' subject '. The hypnotic loses his independent individuality, the awareness of which becomes a source of lifelong misery to him. The consciousness as well as the actual state of one's being under the sway of another person, is fraught with great danger. Such a person is always haunted with fear. It is a sort of destruction of the physical mind itself."

I once happened to ask such a hypnotic : How many persons are here in this hall ? " He answered : " Fifteen. " I again asked : "Including yourself or excluding yourself ? " He

answered : " I cannot say ? " This means that the ' subject ' entirely loses his individual self.

On the other hand, mystical experience is full of bliss and is ever-growing. Hence our mind becomes more and more powerful. Continuity, Universality, and Bliss are its criteria. Hypnotic power diminishes by its use, while mystical experience grows day by day. "

## (32)

## Theotropism and Spiritual Waves.

In the course of a conversation about meditation and spiritual experiences *Sri Gurudeo* remarked : " Good meditation is an outcome of the Grace of God. According to the spiritual law of tropism. God Himself attracts the devotee and draws him nearer and nearer. It is the growing attractive power of the *Vastu* that heightens the quality of meditation."

" The idea of coining this new word viz *Theotropism* dawned upon me at the time of meditation. Mere tropism might be psychologiacl, mental or imaginary But theotropism must be a ' mystical experience. "

" The spiritual waves spread out from a spiritually realised soul, influence the world. The sound waves are spread everywhere. But receiving stations are necessary for getting them. Otherwise they will not be felt. In the case of spiritual waves, the receiving set is not necessary. In this case it is creative. Rhythmic energy is created in the human body by meditation. "

" If physical sound can produce wonderful result in surgery etc. then *Anahata* sound can produce more. Sound waves are at source electric waves.

## (33)

## My Philosophy

Once Sri Gurudeo was asked to explain the nature of his Philosophy when he said : " How I live is my Philosophy. I am a *Sthitaprajna* in God-realisation and not in behaviour. My spiritual experience has granted me a firm conviction regarding the existence of God. I am perfectly convinced that God alone is real and everything else - body, creation etc - is unreal. We may define *Sthitaprajna* as one who is firmly fixed in his spiritual experience. But my spiritual experience has not directly influenced my conduct. My anger is still there, even though very often it is an outcome of my physical weakness. Peace is only an outer expression of inner experience. It does not matter even if it is not always present. It is the experience that matters. We do come across people with no spirituality, enjoying peace. But we are infinitely superior to them. My peace is not an outcome of effort and is imprinted in my intellect by my spiritua experience."

## (34)

## A strange Vision

Once in 1908, *Sri Gurudeo*, Prof, Wodehouse, Sri Bhadabhade, Sri Vishnupant Karandikar and Sri V. G. Paranjape were discussing in the bungalow of Prof. Wodehouse, about Carlyle's Sartor Resartus. At that time *Sri Gurudeo* once casually peeped out of the window in front of him, which was on the side of Alandi. Just then, he saw a huge expans of light extending high up midway into the sky above. At once *Sri Gurudeo* automatically got up from the chair. And when he got up, all others also, automatically stood up, without any intimation from anybody. All of them could see that light and they were

looking at it for two or three minutes. Thereafter the light gradually became fainter and fainter and ultimately became invisible. Prof. Wodehouse remarked: "Today my spiritual life began"

"I was not meditating," told *Sri Gurudeo* about the vision, "for a long time then. But the quality of my heart had improved a good deal. The incarceration of Tilak, the turbulent political atmosphere etc. had agitated the heart. This must have been the cause of that vision of light."

"When our heart is purified, we see God. Mere meditation will not necessarily lead to the vision of God. Spiritual experience depends upon the purity and intensity of our heart."

"In 1908, I used to see brilliant stars on the book. So I could not see the letters, And when they covered the whole book, it was impossible for me to read it. I saw a network of stars of different colours. Mystical light makes other objects invisible. Mystic sound likewise, absorbs all other sounds."

## (35)

## Sri Gurudeva's Meditation

Once Sri Gurudeva intimated the nature of his meditation to some of his intimate disciples in this manner :

"When my meditation is in full swing, I don't feel like leaving it. It is a sort of intoxication like that of tea. Then the *Sādhaka* behaves like "*Balonmatta-pis'âcavat.*" A bee that touches honey will not leave it.

The quality of my meditation at Allahabad is inferior to that at Nimbal. My routine there is fairly regular. This regularity

hinders my meditation. During the three months at Nimbal there is a complete revision of my *Paramārth*-spiritual experience. *Sri Maharaj* used to say :

*Māge ujalani pudhe pātha, nema karāvā nikaṭa*
*Bāṣkalapaṇāci vaṭavaṭa, kāmā naye.*

" Meditate intensely. Revise the old and attain the new. Waste not your time in vulgar prattle ! "

This year ( 1943 ) I spent the three months at Nimbal in perfect bliss which knew no bounds. This year I used to get up at mid-night or at 1 or 2 A M. everyday and meditate for hours together. Formerly I used to meditate on alternate days.

## (36)
## Reconciliation of Saguna and Nirguna.

Once *Sri D.* referred to an article in a *Marāthi* Journal by Sri K. about *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa* aspects of God and stated that Sri K. had quoted a passage from *Sri Gurudeva's* " *Mysticism in Maharastra* " in support of his contention that *Sri Jñaneśvara* was a devotee of Personal God. At this *Sri Gurudeva* smiled and said : " How can these persons understand the relation between *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa* aspects of God ? " Once Dr. Bhandarkar had asked me as to how we can reconcile these two aspects. I had also given a proper reply which had satisfied him. Mystical experience alone can bring about this reconciliation. How can this be understood by those who are quite innocent of such an experience ?

## (37)
## Ideal and Process of God-realisation.

*Sri Gurudeva* once asked a disciple to read a letter by a Saint in a Journal just received by him. It was stated in it : " Realisation of the Highest is the one aim of human life. Our

highest duty is God-realisation. Service of humanity theis mis-translation of Truth." *Sri Gurudeva* expressed his full approval to this remark.

About the process of God-realisation it was further pointed out in the letter to this effect : God realisation can be achieved by concentration on the two centres viz : i) Heart and ii) Brain. New spiritual powers are opened up as a result of this concentration The first process is easier to start with. The second. more difficult. yet more important." At this, *Sri Gurudeva* said : " Yes ! it is true. But this distinction vanishes when the Divine Power descends, on the aspirant and envelops his whole being. The relative positions of the heart and the brain, as seats of the soul, have been fully described in the *Upanisads* ( Vide " Constructive Survey " PP. 94-95. New Edition ).

In the same letter there was a reference to a centre above the head from which Infinity descends, which evoked this remark by *Sri Gurudeva* : " Yes ! it is like a Radio. It is comparatively easier to receive the Power than to transmit it. It is very difficult to become a Transmission Centre. Really the Power should be transmitted from the person without his knowledge. If he becomes conscious of it, it would increase his egoism and transmission would lose its efficacy. Moreover it is also dangerous to the sādhaka."

## (38)

## Peace and Joy

In the course of discussion, one day a disciple wanted to know the nature of and the relation between Peace and Joy. *Sri Gurudeva* explained :

" Peace and Joy are contradictory emotions. Peace

( *Sāṇti* ) equalises and Joy ( *Ānañda* ) lifts up leads upwards. Emotions are of three kinds : i) Anatropic ii) Metatropic and iii) Catatropic. The first lifts up. the second equalises while the third brings about depression. We cannot say which of the two viz *Sāṇti* and *Ānañda*-is higher. To some God grants. Peace, to others He grants Joy. Both are valuable. But they should come as a result of God-realisation, not be mere attitudes to be attained by practice. The presence of both Peace and Joy in the same Saint is very rare. *Sri Maharaj* possessed both of them. "

" Spiritual Joy hovered like an eagle this morning. When spiritual power descends and enveloos. the whole univers appears to be full of power, peace and joy " " Last year ( 1943 ) I got this exoerience at *Satnā Station* while I was proceeding to Allahabad. Then there was spiritual transformation in the very Nature itself. "

Shri Gurudeva, however, has expressed his final opinion about the relation of Peace and Joy in his book on the *Gita* in these words; ( Page 265 First Edition ).

" The present writer thought for a long while that joy was elative and peace was equanimous and therefore there could not be any compatibility between the two Joy lifts us upwards and peace keeps us on a level. Tne one is anatropic and the other is metatropic. He has, however, come to the conclusion that ultimate peace would be even a higher category but that peace could not be attained except through joy. "

## (39)
## God would Reside in the Heart that is Free from Passion

Dr. B. of Athani had once come to see *Sri Gurudeva*. It was his first visit. Still *Sri Gurudeva* felt that he was an old acquaintance of his. Hence the conversation that ensued

between them was extremely cordial, free and frank.

" Look here, " said *Sri Gurudeva*, " Ours is altogether a different field. God is the driving force of the whole world. Why not of politics? If we, once, attain Him, what can we not achieve ? "

Then *Sri Gurudeva* asked a disciple to read the following *Abhanga* of *Sri Tukaram* : " *Sarpa bhuloniyā guntalā nādā* " the purport of which is as follows : " I have been verily pent up in *Saṁsāra* as a serpent is pent up within the basket. by the music of a juggler. Save me by Thy power..... Like a fly I stick in a sweet substance. The more I shake my wings the more I get myself inside. My very life is departing. Save me by Thy power, O God !" A moth, a fish, a serpent, a bee and an elephant are enchanted and deluded by one of the respective objects of form, taste, sound, fragrance and touch. What would be the condition of man who is a prey to the attractions of all the five senses? Is it not necessary, then, for a man to be forewarned and to keep himself away from them ? Should he not hurry up and try to attain *Paramārtha* ? It is only when he gives up the desire for these objects that he would have the benefit of God's vision. " When desire departs, God would reside in the heart " says *Tukaram*.

That which grants us vision of God is our Religion and our Ethics. But Kant thinks otherwise : " I may attain God or I may not. I shall perform my duty. " His Categorical Imperative is of that nature. It enjoins the performance of duty for the sake of duty.

It is idle to say : " I shall attend to devotional practice in my old age. " Because, " Is life at your command? " asked *Sri Maharaj*.

## (40)
## Nature of Nāma and Internal Meditation

" How to carry on internal meditation on *Nāma* ?" was the question, asked by Dr. K. one evening when *Sri Gurudeva* explained : " There is no End other than *Nāma* " is the opinion held by some while others opine : there is no Means other than *Nāma.*" Both opinions are equally valid. *Nāma* is both the End as well as the Means. *Nāma* shows the *Rūpa* ( Form ) of God. Hence it is a means to the seeker. But to those who are out, exclusively to meditate on *Nāma* without caring for the vision of God, it is an End in itself.

*Sri Tatyāsāheb Ranade* got himself initiated by *Sri Maharaj* and in 1904 at 4 P. M. he saw the spire of the temple at *Incagiri* studded with spiritual pearls. Thereafter, without caring for spiritual experiences, he carried on his meditation as a sacred duty till his death. To him *Nāma* was an End in itself.

Meditation should be sincere and soulful. *Nāma* is a symbol for realising the Ultimate Reality underlying the Universe. " *Oṁ iti ekāksaraṁ brahma* "- Om is the Absolute. We should understand the significance of this *Mantra*. Mere vocal utterance of *Nāma* becomes mechanical. We should properly understand the relation of *Rūpa*-Form, *Bhāva*-Devotion and *Nāma*-Name. Form is Mystical entity or Spiritual entity; Devotion is a Psychological entity or Moral entity; while Name is Mysterious Physical entity, which includes the other two.

Very often when we have the vision of the Divine Form, we remember the Name. Ultimately, Name and Form become one-identical. It is very difficult to realise that Name itself is Form. The Infinite must be invoked with a devotional heart, But it is very difficult to entertain such devotion-such

a passionate longing for the Lord. It is only the company of Saints that can induce it. "

## (41)
## How to Intensify Concentration ?

When a disciple asked *Sri Gurudeva* as to how to make concentration soulful, he explained :

" *Patañjali* has defined Yoga as *Citta-vṛtti-nirodha-* or control of the mental flow. It is also true that mind becomes steady by the control of *Prâña* through the practice of *Prâṇâ-yâma* or breath-control. But this method does not bring about a change in the quality of the mind. This is really a process from the Bottom. *Trâtaka* etc. are all external processes.

But there is a process from the *Top* which is really more important. Concentration through devotion is a superior process. A devotee meditates on *Nâma* with his heart filled with devotion and attains the vision of God. In the '*Bottom to Top*' process mentioned above. the physic becomes God. That process is slightly more practical, no doubt. But it may not necessarily lead to God. On the other hand, in the '*Top to Bottom*' process, God becomes God. It begins from the very beginning. For undergoing the process of *Hatha-Yoga*, our physic must be strong. But for devotional meditation, and concentration, ordinary constitution is sufficient.

Proper time and place are also necessary, for good concentration. But growth of mental ardour is of prime importance. *Tîvrasaṁvegânâṁ âsannah*. It all depends upon the fervour. Our earnest passion for spiritual welfare, should gush up like a fountain towards God. Such a warm zeal can be developed through (i) Discrimination and (ii) Holy company.

i) Intellectual study of the literature of Saints will be

of some use to facilitate discrimination. But along with it meditation on *Nāma* should be necessarily performed. Otherwise we won't be able to understand clearly the real significance of such literature. The expression of an experience can be properly understood only by those who have got such an experience, or enjoyed it. Others won't. The other day, *Master Krishnarao* sung the *Abhaṇga* of *Jṇaneśvara* viz. " *Krishnā hāla kā re* "How can he understand its real meaning? This *Abhaṅga* of three lines cannot be understood even by three hundred scholars.

To understand the real secret grandeur of *Paramārtha*-spiritual experience, the literature of all the Saints of the world must be properly studied. And the unity of experience presented in it should be ascertained.

ii) This discrimination should be associated with the Company of Saints for developing its efficacy. These two would greatly help to intensify devotion and zeal of the seeker. It is only when the intensity reaches a stage in which the seeker is prepared to sacrifice everything for the Lord, that he would have the experience of the Spiritual Energy.

Spiritual Energy descends through Saints like *Jñāneśvara* and others like him. They possess a Reservoir of Spiritual Energy which oozes down through them. Spiritual knowledge flows unconsciously through them. The company of such Saints intensifies our fervour. Even an exchange of thought with them will be of great help. Their mere presence also is quite enough Even a graceful glance of their *Kūrma- dṛṣti* would be valuable. But it is not practicable. Things have to be realised or achieved by ourselves.

## (42)
## The Triple Confluence

In the course of conversation there was once a

reference to the *Triveni Saṅgam* of *Prayāg* where there is a confluence of three rivers - *Gaṅgā*, *Yamunā* and *Suraswati* -two manifest and one hidden. At this *Sri Gurudeva* remarked : "There is a spiritual Triple Confluence. Do you know ? God, Devotee and *Nāma* form this Triple Confluence. Of them, two are visible like *Gaṇgā*, *Yamunā*, and one is invisible like *Suraswatī*. Normally Devotee and *Nāma* are manifest and God is unmanifest,-hidden. In the second stage, Devotee and God ( *Rūpa* - Form ) are manifest and *Nāma* is hidden. While in the third stage, *Nāma* and *Rūpa* (God) are manifest and the Devotee goes underground. *Sri Maharaj* once remarked : " Though the Saints depart from the world, the *Rūpa* experienced by them remains as before. " Thus God, Devotee and Nãma form a Triple Confluence in all the three senses. When the Devotee merges in the Lord, God and Nāma alone remain. This is a Confluence of a higher stage. "

## (43)

## Meditation on World as God.

About the *Pantheistic* conception of " World is God " *Sri Gurudeva* once observed : " It is not enough to consider that God has assumed the beautiful form of the world. It must be directly experienced. To realise the Power that controls and guides the Universe, a different *Sādhana* is required. To observe God in everything and every event in the Universe, is a meditation of a higher quality. God is the beginning and end of the Universe. This fact must be actually experienced. Before our meditation passes from the mental to the spiritual realisation, the process in the middle is extremely difficult -nay, it may even be considered to be practically impossible. To pass from idea to reality is more an ontological argument than a spiritual reality. Meditation on *Nāma* alone is an easy means for its realisation."

## (44)
## Meditation on Virtues.

*Sri Gurudeva* further continued : "Very often meditation on virtues also is recommended. The Theosophists meditate on virtues like *Abhaya*-Fearlessness, *Satva-saṁśudhi*-Purity etc. " Today I shall be fearless, charitable. I shall be straightforward. " Such is their repeated auto-suggestion for a number of days, till they feel that they have assimilated the respective virtue. Aristotle says : 'Character is produced or formed by the repetition of the same act. ' Such meditation and practice of virtues becomes a basis for future spiritual achievement. That is all. This *Sādhana* has no more value than that."

Really we must perceive God in all beings,-in everything. We must be able to see and perceive Him both with eyes shut and open. Spiritual vision is supersensuous. A blind man sees the vision better as there is nothing to blur it.

Unless we have a vision of God, we won't attain the powers and virtues. On the other hand the possession of these powers and virtues will facilitate spiritual realisation Thus Ethics and Mysticism are inter-dependent. Ethical and Spiritual growth meet in God. They meet in Infinity. There is never a straight line. So parallel lines meet in Infinity.

## (45)
## Supreme Humility of a Supreme Genius.

Dr. P. K. Gode-the late Curator and Research Scholar of the Bhandarkar Research Institute, Poona-who was a student of Dr. Ranade, wrote a letter to him, requesting Dr. Ranade to allow him to publish a Commemoration Volume, on his 60 th Birth Day, in memory of his signal service to the sacred cause of Education, Philosophy and Spiritual Life. When the letter was read out to *Srl Gurudeva* by a disciple, he peremptorily asked him to take down the following reply :

" Without waiting for a single minute I must write to you that you need not commemorate me on my 60th Birth-Day. I have done nothing for which I need be commemorated. I am no better than an animalcule. You might be remembering what I said to Prof. Shrikhande at the Deccan College; ' To praise a rising friend is to curse him. ' That holds good even today. "

## (46)
## Kannada Mystics

Once Sri H. had been to *Sri Gurudeva* from Bijapur, to pay his respects to him. He was a pioneer in publishing *vacana* literature of *Vīraśaiva* Saints in *Kannada*. Naturally *Vacana* literature and *Kannada* Saints was the topic of discussion that day. " I first came to know, " began *Sri Gurudeva*, "about your English translation of the *Vacanās* of *Basava*, by reading the opinion of Mr. Macnicol. They were published in the Indian Antiquery. Isn't it? " "Not all. Some of them were published in it," replied Sri H. Then *Sri Gurudeva* remarked : "*Akhaṇḍēśwar* appears to be a good *Vacanakāra* ( a saint who has written *Vacanas* ). He combines in him oratory, philosophy and occultism. Really *Vacanas* are a configuration of Prose and Poetry. The mystic literature that we come across in *Karnātak* and *Mahārāstra* is rarely to be found in Upper India. You have to seek hundreds of volumes to find out a good spiritual song. What is more? The *Kannada* saints went directly to mysticism and not to mythology, like other saints. The *Vacanakāras* have expressed what they have actually experienced."

## (47)
## About the History of Indian Philosophy.

Then Sri H. asked *Sri Gurudeva* about the publication of his History of Indian Philosophy. *Sri Gurudeva* gave him all the details about the proposed publication and said. "You see, want of money and energy is the primary cause of not

publishing the volumes. Moreover, as there are few well - qualified writers, it is best to publish monographs after the German method. Only a few persons should not take the entire responsibility of publishing all volumes. Let them be published in any order."

To explain why there was a break in the continuity of publishing such a series of volumes, *Sri Gurudeva* said : "People care more for political and social advancement and not for cultural, personal and spiritual progress. Hence they are quite indifferent about such publications. "

Then *Śri Gurudeva* asked one of his disciples to write a thesis on such cultural subjects for his Ph. D " Such a thesis should preferably be written in English, " remarked Śri H., "so that it should be useful to a wider circle of readers " "Such thesis," observed *Śri Gurudeva*, "should be written both in English as well as in the regional language. Then it would be useful both for ideological literature, as well as for linguistic and literary expansion. In our Allahabad University, the candidate submitting his thesis in English is required to submit its Hindi translation along with it. In case the candidate is unable to translate it in Hindi, himself, he should get it translated by others and submit it. This would be very valuable for enriching our regional languages. "

## (48)

## About Bodha Sudhe

Thereafter, *Śri Gurudeva* related to Sri H how his first *Kannada* book viz. "*Bodha Sudhe*" took shape. It contains the *Vacanās* of *Śri Nimbargi Mahāraj*, the eminent Master of his Master *Śri Bhausaheb Maharaj*. He said : " Originally, they were disjointed stray utterances of *Nimbargi Mahărāj* collected by his *vaisnava* disciple *Raghunāthācārya*. It was a bi-lingual

narration of philosophic discussion of the great Saint. We have merely arranged them in the Aristotelean fashion. It is an ethico-religious argument.

We did not want to make it classical. It was kept as it was, to make it individualistic. Not a single new word was introduced. Everything was kept as it was, in proper arrangement. We have done nothing more than a gardener.

The book contains the fundamental principles of ethics. This is something similar to what Aristotle has done, but something beyond him. Aristotle has merely defined the principles of ethics; but we have defined the use of ethical principles for spiritual life. Really ethical principles derive their validity from the mystic experience. *Satya* ( Truth ) is that which is done in the light of God and *Asatya* ( Untruth ) outside it.

Then *Sri Gurudeva* asked his disciple to read the contents of the book in which there were two sections titled " *Horakâlaga* " ( External conflict) and " *Olakālaga* "-( Internal conflict ). When these sections were mentioned *Sri Gurudeva* told how every person is required to face two types of conflicts in his life. This has been tellingly described by *Saint Tukāram* as follows; " Day and night are we required to fight, with the world outside and mind inside. "

Thereafter the disciple was asked to read the entire section viz. **Fundamentals of Conduct.** When the reading was over, *Sri Gurudeva* asked " What is the ultimate principle of conduct ? " and offered this reply himself. " It is the realisation of oneness, of atonement, of *Sāmarasya*, with God. Whatever helps us to develop our insight into God's nature, and enables us to realise Him, is moral. Everything else is immoral. "

At this Sri H. remarked : " This principle appears to be

akin to the principle of '*Kāyakave Kailas*'- 'Work is worship'- of the *Viraśaiva* Saints." "Yes! to a certain extent," replied *Sri Gurudeva* "But there is a good deal of difference. Any work cannot be worship. It is only the work that is meant for the realisation of God, that is inspired by God. or done under the canopy of His illumination that would deserve to be called 'Worship."

*Sri Gurudeva* then asked his disciple to sing his 'Prayer to the Great Master' - *Sri Nimbargi Maharaj*. He liked the Prayer very much and intended to publish it at the beginning of his "*Bodha-Sudhe.*" In the course of singing. when he came across the line : "*Kṛtiyu belagali ninna beḷakinalli*" - "Let my activity shine under the canopy of Thy illumination," *Sri Gurudeva* remarked : "Then alone the action will be worship" And when the next line. "*Ninna karuṇave anna, ninna karuṇave nīru, ninna karñave usiru enagāgali–*" "Let Thy grace be my food, drink and breath to me," was recited, *Sri Gurudeva* pointed out to Sri H. "Look! how poetry is inspired by religion!" "*Ninna karuṇave usiru*" is specially important. Because even a single breath is highly valuable in spiritual life. Who knows? Even during that short span of time, God's grace might descend upon the aspirant. King *Parīkṣit* was liberated during seven days and *Khatvanga* during 2 hours and a half. If a man could live even for a moment and takes one more breath, he must thank God, for he can meditate on Him during that tiny interval and realise God. Keeping this aspect in view poet *Kalidās* has remarked :

*Kṣaṇuma pyavatisthate śvasaṇ ṇanu jantuh khalu bhāgyavānasau*" "The person who is able to breath even for a single minute is really very fortunate."

## (49)
## On the Gita ( Chapter XII )

Dr. B. of Athani had been to Nimbal a second time.

When *Sri Gurudeva* was informed about his arrival, he was at once called to his room. As he entered the room, *Sri Gurudeva* greeted him with a smile and said : " Well doctor ! you have come again. You must have many serious cases to attend. How could you find time to come here? ". At this Dr. B. replied : " Sir ! my case also is still more serious. It has brought me here " After a hearty laugh, the sitting began A disciple was, then, asked to read his selections for the ' *Dhyāna Gitā* ' which was under preparation. Before the reading began, *Sri Gurudeva* said : I have worked very hard on the Gītā. Very few might have put in so much labour over it. We are, after all, free lances. Our own experience alone is of supreme importance to us. Nothing else is of any consequence. Since you are all open-minded, I feel like telling you frankly about my personal views about the Gītā. In the company of such people one is tempted and inspired to speak freely and frankly "

" Just take for instance the Chapter XII of the *Gitā*. In it a comparison is instituted between " *Avyakta Akṣara* " on the one hand and " *Vyakta-Aham* " on the other. Really speaking there is no difference between " *Saguṇa* " and "*Nirguṇa*". God is not merely *Saguṇa* or merely *Nirguṇa*. He is both *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa* combined. What should be worshipped ? Is it His four-handed Form ? or Cosmic form ? Mere *Saguṇa* is after all perishable. What can we gain by worshipping it ? Moreover, *Sri Kṛṣṇa* was a realised Saint of that period. Why should he be invested with four hands, or with thousand hands? In the same manner, mere *Nirguṇa* cannot be worshipped. No worship is possible in that case The so-called worship of the *Avyakta* is simply meditation upon vacuity. This is only intellectual worship. That won't lead to God-head. Hence the worship of one who is neither merely *Saguṇa* nor merely *Nirguṇa*, who is both *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa*, is the best.

The author of the *Gitā*, however, appears to suggest

that by following the Aboslute, one can reach God. But merely by intellectual constructions God cannot be attained. Still the general tendency among the scholars seems to favour meditation on vacuity.That is after all worship of *Śūnya*⚙-that too of a false *Śūnya*. The worship that leads to the realisation of real *Śūnya* is quite different. How is God attained by meditating on the idea of void. can only be explained by those who have actually attained that experience. The author of the *Gitā*, however, characterises it as " extremely difficult " ( *Klēśodhikatara* ).

Then *Sri Gurudeva* asked his disciple to read his selections from the 12th Chapter of the *Gītā*. When the third and the fourth verses were read, he pointed out that adjectives, " *Kūṭastha. Acalo, Dhruva* etc. " are applicable, not only to the worshipper of *Avyakta* – ( the Unmanifest ) but they are also applicable to a *Bhakta*. -a devotee of the Lord. For no great work will be achieved without the control of the senses. The epithet - *sarvabhūtahiteratah* - contains the idea of equal opportunity to all.

When the verse " *Ye tu sarvāni karmāṇi mayi sanyasya .. māṁ dhyāyaṅt upāsate* " ( Those who dedicate all their actions to Me and meditate on Me ) was read, a disciple asked: " Which of the two viz. dedication and meditation, precedes the other ? " *Sri Gurudeva* replied: ' It is only after God-realisation through intense meditation that genuine dedication of actions to God is possible. Still, in the beginning we should try to practise dedication by way of preliminary preparation. This appears to be the suggestion here. "

Thereafter. he began to explain the following line in the next verse : " *Teṣāmahaṁ samuddhartā bhavāmi acirāt* "- ( I soon become their saviour. ) " Whom does God save ? He

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⚙ There appears to be a pun on the word " *Śūnya* " here which means both *void* and cipher or *Bindule*.

saves those who fix their minds on Him, not all. If a person is corrupt, even God has no power to save him. Even if God has the power why should He use it ? If the devotion and faith of the aspirant reaches a sufficiently high pitch, then alone will he be saved by God. Let it be noted here that the word '*Acirāt*' ( soon ) is to be understood from the spiritual point of view. " if our conduct is good, " asserted *Sri Nimbargi Maharaj*, " even all the three gods can do us no harm. "

" The upshot of this Chapter XII appears to be, " continued *Sri Gurudeva*. " (i) that work for the sake of realising God is real *Sanyāsa* ( Renunciation ) and (ii) that God-realisation is the sole aim and end of human life for which worship in the form of meditation should be practised. We should have a firm faith that we work only for the sake of God. But meditation only is actual worship. It alone should be our main item of worship. Thus if we fix (i) God as our ideal, and (ii) practise meditation (iii) with an unwavering, steady mind, we would be liberated ' *Aciraāt* ' (soon). " Dedicate both your unsteady and steady feelings and attitudes to Me" advises the Lord. Always entertain thoughts about the Lord, about Saints or about spiritual *Sādhana*. Imagine ' I am a sinner, God is all-merciful. *saṁśayātmakaṁ manah niscayātmikā buddhih*. ' Mind is full of doubt; Reason is full of resolve. ' Even your doubts should be about God Thus fix your mind in Him. If you cannot do that too, serve the saints because service of saints is virtually service of God Himself. " *Tasmiṅ tajjane bhedàbhāvāt* ( There is no difference between Him and His devotees). Mere moral, psychological and social attitude will not have the merit of service of saints. It is true that God is present in the universe ( *Nārāyaṇa ase viśvi* ). But we must actually realise His presence. Then alone will our social service become service of God. "

In this way (i) Firm Devotion (ii) Soulful Meditation and (iii) Service of Saints. constitute what is termed ' *Matkarma* ' by the Lord. This is the path of God-realisation. Mere study

of philosophy won't be able to attain it. Philosophy has been defined, by a Western scholar, in this way. " Philosophy is a search for a black cat in a dark place where it is not.' Can its worthlessness be described in a better manner ?

## (50)
## Company of Saints

Referring to his remark regarding the ' Service of Saints' *Sri Gurudeva* further observed. " A saint himself is God. God Himself is saint. Hence service of a Saint is service of God. Our daily meditation should be coupled with the holy company of saints. Then alone will it bear proper fruit. It is in the company of saints that we would realise the real value of meditation If we try to live in their company for good many days and observe their behaviour minutely we would understand how they have realised their identity with God and possess His Glory.

Take for intance, my own case. It was the year 1909 or 1910. I was then meditating daily for 7 hours : 2 hours in the morning, 1 hour in the afternoon. 2 hours in the evening and 2 hours at night ( from 11 P. M. to 1 A M ). I carried on my meditation vigorously minute to minute. If I resolved to get up at 2-11 A. M., I used to wake up exactly at 2-11 A. M. without the aid of an alarm clock. Once Sri N. S. Lokur asked me to wake him up at 3-43 A M. The wonder of it was, I awoke exactly at 3-43 and woke him up. Such psychological miracles used to take place at that time. Of course it was not an important occurrence.

Once during that period, I happened to pay a visit to *Incagiri. Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj* knew the method of my meditation. Still, one day he addressed me in this manner : " What is the use of mere meditation ? We should seek the company of saints. Then we would realise its real worth."

I was greatly non plussed and surprised to hear this remark of *Śri Maharaj* I wanted to know its significance. But I dared not ask *Sri Maharaj* directly. He was very strict and stern. Hence I asked his close bodyguard Sri Nandyappa the meaning of *Sri Maharaja's* remark. He told me that I should accompany Sri Maharaj when he was on spiritual tour. Hence, soon after I went to Poona, I came to Jamakhandi as *Sri Maharaj* was on tour in villages nearby. I took the chance of accompanying him during this tour. I could then closely observe his divine life and was greatly benefitted thereby.

*Sri Maharaj* performed his meditation regularly. He could ascertain the exact time of his meditation to the minute. His daily meditation was for 9 hours : 3 hours in the morning, 1 hour at noon, 3 hours in the evening and 2 hours at night. He rarely had any sleep. In fact he never needed it. During the month of *Srāvaṇa*, he used to live on one dried date per day. At *Incalgiri*, he used to take a few morsels of food only. Such was the austere life he led. Still, so long as his *Sadguru - Sri Nimbargi Maharaj* was alive, he never failed to see him at least once a week and have the pleasure and benefit of his inspiring company. He thus, received the inspiration and guidance of his Master for well-nigh 25 years, before he could attain the higher reaches of spiritual experience "

## (51)
## On the Gita ( Chapter XIII )

After this, there was a break when *Sri Gurudeva* went out of the room for a few minutes. Soon after his return, he asked his disciple to read his selections from the 13th chapter of the *Gitā*. He had classified the selected verses in five groups. When the verses in the first group were read *Sri Gurudeva* said : " Here virtues like *Amānitva* etc, have been

characterised as *Jñāna* or knowledge by the *Gitâ* The author of the *Gitā* regards knowledge as virtue. To him knowledge means virtue. It does not mean differential Calculus, radio, or bacteriology. Knowledge is wisdom, is a *Socratic* dictum This is veritably a bold statement. The climax of all these virtues is exclusive devotion to the Lord. Whan you imbibe these virtues, you will become a *Jñāni*-a wise man. This is the definition of *Jñāna* given here. But in the line. *Na hi jñānena sadṛśaṁ* -" *Jñāna* means illumination or realisation of God ' *Kṛtiyu beḷagali ninna beḷakinalli* ' - Let my act shine in Your illumination, ' prays a modern poet. We must first experience spiritual illumination and then perform our actions in it. That is real offering our actions to the Lord.

Then the verses in the second group were read when *Sri Gurudeva* remarked : This group contains the description of *Jñeyu*- of intellectual Absolute. It is without and within all beings and constitutes both animate and inanimate creation. It is both far and near. Such is God. The whole universe arises from Him and ultimately merges in Him. "

Then the verses in the third group were read when *Sri Gurudeva* said : " This grouo deals with the four *Sādhanās* mentioned by the Gītā They are : (i) *Dhāyna*-meditation (ii) *Sāṅkhya* knowledge. (iii) *Karma*-Action and (iv) *Bhakti*-devotion. We should meditate daily for nine hours on God We should try to think and gain knowledge of God We should perform disinterested action for God or if that were not possible, we should have firm faith on some saint worthy of our adoration. " *Ananya prokte gatiratra nāsti* " says the *Upaniṣad.* The Saint should ever be absorbed in God, become one with Him. Till then he won't deserve to be called a saint. We should listen to the words of wisdom of such a saint, and carry out his instructions faithfully. Then alone we will attain Liberation. "

At this a disciple asked : " Sir, which of these four paths is superior ? " *Śri Gurudeva* replied : Really these are not independent paths at all. They are different aspects of the one pathway or *Pañtharāj* as *Śri Jñāneśvar* would call it. In fact, mere knowledge or action will not be able to achieve anything. Meditation on God coupled with faith and devotion is the real spiritual *Sãdhana* . "

" Once *Sri Gundopant Gadagkar* had asked *Sri Baba* whether *Karma* ( work ) was superior to *Jñãna* ( knowledge ) or *Jñãna* was superior to *Karma*. *Sri Baba* replied : " Both of them are not superior : only God is superior ." When I came to know about this answer, I asked this very question to the students of the M. A. Examination of the Bombay University that year in the following manner : "Show whether works are superior to knowledge or knowledge is superior to works or God - realisation is superior to both." Don't follow merely work or knowledge; follow *Bhakti* — devotion."

When the verses in the fourth group were read, *Sri Gurudeva* observed : " Just mark the words ' *Samadarśana* '- equality of vision, here ' *Samaṁ paśyan hi sarvatra,* ' says the *Gitā*. What is meant by *Samaṁ paśyan* in this verse ? *Sama* means equal and straight. It also means symmetrical and full ( *Sampūrṇa* ). When we have the direct vision of the full *Swarūpa*-one's own form-in all beings and on all beings, that is *Samadarśana* or equality of vision. Once *Sri Baba* was asked to explain the nature of *Samādhi*. He replied: " *Sama samāna vastu kāṇisitu aṅdare samādhi āgatada* "- " When the spiritual Form is directly visualised, it is *samādhi*. " This experience of *samādhi* is enjoyed without any external demonstration. *Sri Tukārām* mentions, *Samacarana dṛṣṭi* '-symmetrical vision fixed on the ' Pair of Feet of the Lord. ' Mystics tell us that such a vision of the Lord's Feet comes last in the series of

spiritual visions."

Thereafter the following verse in the fifth group evoked a few comments from *Sri Gurudeva* :

*Yadā bhūtapṛthagbhāvaṁ ekasthaṁ anupaśyati,*
*Tata eva ca vistāraṁ brahma saṁpadyate tadā.*

"When the aspirant realises the various beings as resting in One, and evolve from the One alone, then he attains *Brahmañ.*" *Sri Gurudeva* remarked : "The whole universe is centred in one place and this extension has proceeded from the same place. That is the One supreme Being. A person who has directly experienced this—realised this, he alone can be called a *Jñāni*-a realised Saint. He realises that God alone does everything. *Sri Maharaj* used to say: 'We must realise this Doer." God is the greatest totalitarian of all. Follow God and there will be no room for any conflict."

"Thus all these topics are very useful for meditation. We should repeatedly read and think about them. Our psychology must not move outside spiritual life. *Sri Baba* used to tell us : 'Even in dream he used to perform *Bhajan, Arati* etc.' Thus spirituality should permeate our whole life."

## (52)
## Seat of the Soul

After this, Dr. B. Asked: "Sir? what is the seat of the Soul ?" *Sri Gurudeva* replied: "The brain seems to possess greater consciousness and power than the other parts of the body. Brain contains conscious cells. Latest medical research has revealed that the fluid in the spinal cord keeps the ultimate metabolism of the body. The fluid is the vehicle of soul. The top-most Source of the fluid is the seat of the soul. So

even if the fluid goes, the soul does not go. ' *Idaṁ dārayati iti indrah* '. The soul is some power inside the cells. That power when realised is not merely within but is without also.

When you perceive a spiritual *Vastu*, you don't perceive it with the physical eyes. The Unstruck Sound also is not heard with the physical ear. " *Āṇdhalyâne dekhile, bahiryâne aikile.* " The blind person saw and the deaf person heard, says a Saint. In this case the internal impulse proceeds from the soul. It starts from within. It has neither time nor space.

The respective centre in the fourth ventricle appears to be seat of the soul.

It is true that there are a few passages in the *Upaniṣads* expressing that the heart is the seat of the soul. "*Angusṭa mātraḥ puruṣaḥ madhya ātmani tiṣṭhati* "-" The soul of the size of a thumb resides in the heart, " says the *Kathopanisad*. " *Sarvasya cāhaṁ hṛdi sanniviṣṭaḥ.* "- " I reside in the hearts of all ", declares the *Gitā*. But modern physiologists have conclusively proved that the brain is the seat of the soul. The soul resides in the Pituitary Body. The heart has been granted Provincial Autonomy. It can enjoy limited freedom given to it by the brain. It cannot transcend it, ۞

Tnen Dr. B. gave the following information : " In the seventh month the first organ working is the heart whose function is circulation of blood. Hence the heart might have been regarded as the seat of the soul. At that time there is no respiration. Blood is then the carrier of oxygen. Separate existence comes when respiratory centre begins to function.

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۞ c/f. " The soul in the heart could travel along the course of the pituitary body, and through it to its overlord in the lateral ventricle around which, in the grey matter, are situated the various sense-centres." (Constructive Survey of Upan. Philosophy PP. 35-36. Second Edition.)

Till then the baby is the parasite of the mother."

At this *Sri Gurudeva* remarked : "A philosopher has said that man has three births : (i) the first in the womb, (ii) the second when the child is born and (iii) the third after death - when reborn after death. *Upanayana* is only social birth. Initiation by a *Sadguru* is also birth no doubt. But it is not a birth in the body, but birth in the spirit. n fact that is real birth."

## (53)
## Some Effects of Spiritual Experiences

Sri Gurudev once remarked about the effects of Spiritual Experiences as given below :

"In the course of spiritual development, all the principles of Radio, X-ray etc. can be experienced. The current has to be established with the Infinite and everything is possible. The limit and condition of Time and Space etc. are no more there. He can see, hear and feel with each and every cell of his body. He can see his own brain or any other internal part and he can understand past, future and everything. The main thing is, we must cultivate our Bhava by constant and continuous *Smarana* and *Satsanga*. Personal touch with Saints is more valuable than simple *Sadhana*. Ultimately Grace must descend for real development. Heart is more important than head."

## (54)
## Supremacy of Spiritual Life.

For myself, spiritual life has been the most important thing, of which, educational, philosophical, and propagandistic activities are merely the faint expressions. People who have mistaken semblance for fact have taken me as solely devoted to intellectual and philosophical pursuits. But very few know, that my innermost inspiration has been that of spiritual life. Even now, as you say, the time has

not come when spiritual work should be the most transcendent factor of my life. Even now, I must wade through the intellectual waters before I can hope to reach the shrine, which lies at the other end of the stream. That shrine I may not be able to reach, but I am certain of this fact that at present, there is for me nothing of greater consequence, nothing requiring more whole-hearted devotion than the intellectual and philosophic life. If I have been prevented from accomplishing the end of my life in a collegiate institution, I must find a new sphere where my philosophic pursuits would be of greater consequence to the world. If I have been prevented from doing my work I have devoted myself to. I must do it in a far greater institution, an institution much greater than the one in which I have spent the last dozen years of my life. Such an institution cannot be short of anything higher than an Academy of Philosophy and Religion, where representatives of all the Religions and Philosophies must meet together and in which thoughts may be exchanged for the sake of testifying to the greatness and glory of God. Such an Institution is the " Academy of Philosophy and Religion. " of which you may partly see an account in the Bombay Chronicle of the 7 th August. Whether it is ever possible for me to be free from pecuniary dependence even upon such an Institution, will be settled in course of time. I shall hail the day when free I shall have been, when free from dependence of any kind whatsoever, pecuniary or other, even on such an Institution. I may rise superior and regard the kind of life that may be led even in such an Academy as ancillary to that great spiritual life which is the end, not merely of my own spiritual existence, not merely of that of others who may consent to cast in their lot with me, but I am sure, of humanity at large, which is consciously or unconsciously pursuing the Pathway to God. How far we shall be able to achieve such an ideal, remains entirely at the will of God It is only our business to wait, to watch, to work and to pray. ( Letter-14-8-1924 )

## (54)
## Spiritual Experience alone Brings Peace & Joy

I have always believed that the function of philosophy is for the consolidation and consummation of spiritual experience, and it is only the acquisition of this spiritual experience which makes a man worthy of being the handiwork of God. The world is torn with dire conflicts today. There is no hope for humanity except on the basis of spiritual experience whose power, when writ large upon the world, can assuage ascerbated feelings, reconcile warring interests, and make humanity a true mirror of the peace, the joy and the glory which is in God.

(Massage : July 1941 )

## (55)
## Spiritual Unity through Spiritual Religion

Srī Swāmi deserves to be heartily congratulated on his very happy idea of holding an " All Faiths Conference " to bring together men of all kinds of religious belief, and creed, on the same intellectual platform, with a view to bringing about real understanding, harmony and peace, between communities in India in general and Karnatak in particular. For, it is only the spiritual unity of all communities and creeds that is of an abiding and permanent nature; while all groups based on material principles are but superficial and short - lived, as they are not sufficiently broad-based and selfless in their nature.

Such latter trends of thought deserve to be corrected by a broad and fundamentally unifying principle. And this we cannot find anywhere else except in the spiritual nature of man. Men are generally misled by false ideologies and values in life. These values have to be transvalued in the light of what would be permanently useful and beneficial

to the whole humanity without any distinction of caste, creed or nationality. It is only by realising the essential unity of human nature and thereby establishing the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man that the real good of humanity can be achieved. This is the ideal preached and practised by all saints and sages and prophets of the world in the past. *Spiritual Religion*, the creed of all saints of the world, can alone save us from all separatist, disorganizing and dissipating tendencies and forces.

( Message : 29-4-1978 ).

# Jewels of Thought

## (1)
## Ideals of life

1. To realise God both for oneself as well as for others is and should be the Ideal of Life.
2. What we experience, what we feel, and what we realise, should alone constitute our Philosophy.
3. Our only pursuit should be to follow the will of God and meditate on Him. If we just do this, I think, He will come to our help in all circumstances.
4. We are full of joy when we are in the contemplation and realisation of God That state of Beatification is itself our Liberation. Liberation is not to be found after death. But still, to know God, to do His work, to enjoy His Presence and devote ourselves to His service are exactly what a mystic ought to do.
5. Love to Humanity must be based on love to God; if it is not, it is bound to have a shaky foundation. It is love that we bear to God that inspires us to

love man; and those who love man otherwise, love him accidentally and not essentially.

6. Religion is the only secure platform upon which the building of India's activities can be raised. Take it away and the building will tumble down in no time. Substitute another foundation and you will find that the building will be raised on mere stubble.

7. It is only when all humanity comes to recognise the One Spiritual Principle which unederlies all things, that we can bring about harmony between different creeds, nations and races.

8. You have to build and thatch the city of God-devotion, give shade and protection to all those who may come to stay in it and live in it yourself along with your brother devotees. It is ' Theopolis ' where God is the Supreme Ruler, and humanity bound together by the spiritual tie, becomes equal, aspiring denizens whose only vocation is to fill the world with the praise and glory of God.

9. One God, One World, One Humanity should be his maxim. Theopolity, his doctrine. Whosoever realises the Presence of God, can never but direct his life in such a way that the greatness of God becomes not merely understood but also achievable

10 The highest end of all Art should be the glory of God and relief of Man's estate. If fine arts are used in the service of God, there could be no better means to help devotion.

## (2)

## Glory of God

1. God is that Spiritual Power that permeates and holds the Universe.

2. God is the Centre of the Universe which is but an Infinite Circle whose centre is everywhere--and circumference nowhere.
3. God is the unmoved Mover of the Universe. He is the sum-total of all the forces of Nature.
4. God is the Energy that lights the bulbs of human souls.
5. God is a jealous Lord: He doesn't allow any pretender to the throne.
6. God is like the magnet and He attracts the devotees by the love He creates. God fulfils all the desires of the Saints.
7. God must be moved and it is when He is moved—He would move the world by His Grace.
8. To know God is to be God.
9. Bliss is Brahman .. The enjoyment of ecstatic Bliss inside ourselves is the same thing as becoming Brahman.
10. God is the greatest Miracle God alone is able to know His Ultimate Nature.

## (3)

## God's Power and Grace of Guru

1. What man is there who can say that he has realised God comletely? How His Grace descends cannot be described. That it descends in so many cases is a fact.
2. More often God comes in drops and occasionally in floods.
3. God possesses the key of success in the world.
4. A firm faith in God is self-paying.

5. There are higher and higher loyalties. Our highest loyalty should be to *Nâma* and God.

6. Guru is there only to establish a connection between God and man. There is no such God in bodily form, who can communicate spiritual power. Guru is present in all good people to the extent to which they are identified with God in their everyday life.

7. A word from a Spiritual Teacher anywhere is sufficient. It depends upon the state of a spiritual man, as to how much the disciple should develop.

8. Guru cannot infuse energy: it is done for him by God. Why bring that agency? It will be spoiled if it is given the consciousness of it.

9. Personal touch with Saints is more valuable than *Sādhana*. Here there is a terror and fear for the love of God.

10. God has to pull the devotee and the devotee has to push himself to God.

## (4)
## God-devotion

1. God-devotion is an inward impulse that rises from man to God.

2. Devotion is the hunger of the Soul for God.

3. God can be attained by *Bhakti* alone.

4. True devotion is a vision of the identity with God.

5. *Bhakti* means attachment, devotion, one-pointed love towards the object of adoration. ... It is one-pointed and unswerving devotion to God.

6. *Bhakti* or *Bhāva* is an unexplained and inexplicable love of God

7. It is only through one-pointed devotion to God that one may be able to know Him, see Him and enter into Him.

8. It is only after God-vision that true *Bhakti* is generated in man.

9. God-love is a charioteer who leads the chariot of life to spiritual victory.

10. It is spiritual love—love of God which binds all people together.

11. Love for God is the central and the highest virtue.

## (5)
## Nāma Divine

1. *Nāma* is a symbol that carries with it Divine Power.

2. *Nâma* is Divine in posse.

3. From the point of view of science, a *Nāma* might have the highest potentiality of spiritual energy and—another which has no such potentiality. The first kind of *Nāma* would be real atom-bomb of spiritual experience.

4. A *Nâma* that sprouts and a *Nāma* that does not sprout into form—into spiritual experience.

5. The *Nāma* on the tongue lights up both inside and outside.

6. The *Nāma* can transmute a sinner into a Saint.

7. The *Nâma* alone is capable of conferring Immortality.

8. There is a celestial *Nāma* which unfolds itself to our auditory sense at the height of meditation. That *Nāma* is *Ajara* and *Amara*.

9. By the *Nãma* of God are all our difficulties dispelled, and all our calamities swept away.

10. It puts an end to all the misery of the world.

## (6)
## Process of Meditation

1. It is Meditation alone which may enable one to attain to Reality. Meditate in silence.

2. Let your Meditation be continuous. You must not leave a single breath.

3. Combine breath with love, in the light of God's Presence.

4. Intense concentration is the very life - blood of meditational process.

5. Refuse to admit in your mind any idea except that of God. Then alone will spiritual concentration become fruitful.

6. Make an active search for God; no inaction would do, no indifferece, no complacency to allow things to come their own way and in their own time.

7. Don't care for the derision of the world.

8. The crowning piece of performance is the passionate longing of the aspirant for the realisation of God. The devotee must pant for God like fish out of waters.

9. What is wanted is the quality and intensity of the heart.

10. Meditate on God in His Presence.

## (7)
## Nature & Splendour of Spiritual Experience.

1. The Spiritual Power is not generated in ourselves by ourselves. It must descend. It may be regarded as self-generated to some extent.

2. Every man has to gain the spiritual experience for himself. The experience has to come from within. Your experiences are due to internal stimulation.

3. In a spiritual seeker, on account of such internal stimulation the spiritual fluid in the spinal chord rises up-to *Brahma randhra* in the brain

4. This fluid is the external essence of the soul. In a spiritual man the fluid gains spiritual energy. This fluid is the governing factor and it is the nearest physical material for self-manifestation.

5. The spiritual experience is weighed exactly in proportion to the character. The real nature of oneself is known to oneself or to God.

6. In spiritual experience there is some fixed centre around which it grows. The central point is quite steady. All further experiences evolve from this central nucleus and revolve round it. Nothing can move without a nucleus.

7. Mystical experience is continuous and permanent. Perpetuity and continuity are the chief criteria of its reality. God does not come on holidays only. Mystical experience flows continuously like the stream of a river. It will inundate or flood on some occasions.

8. The Spiritual *Vastu* is capable of infinite number of forms and it must subjugate and give us comfort.

9 In the experience of the pearls, colours develop and one colour gives place to another; the brilliant black is interpreted as 'too much light is darkness'.

10 Because of the spiritual experience, every nerve-cell begins to vibrate with the name of God. You see and hear by brain instead of eye and ear.

11. Peace and Joy are the natural results of spiritual experience. They are not attitudes to be attained by practice. Peace, Joy have antithetical equanimity. Generally Joy is fundamentally a matter of experience. Peace is difficult to be had. Joy requires less of self-control, while Peace requires more of it. The experience of Joy itself is divine. To control and curb it is hypocracy. Peace is one of the aspects against Joy.

12. What is *Mukti* ? To be a participant in God's Greatness, Power, Wisdom and Joy is *Mukti*. We must attain it in this life only.

## (8)
## Hindi Saints

1. Kabir is a saint for all Humanity. People suppose tha he merely spiritualised the Hindus and Muslims. This is far less than the truth. He was one of those who have aimed at spiritualising the whole of Humanity.

2. Kabir is a saint to whom all the world must listen. His message will bring together all humanity.

3. Kabir is an evangel of universal peace and good-will.

4. Kabir is the greatest of Hindi mystics. He combines in himself deep philosophical insight with heights of mystical experience.

5 Tulasidas would take the first place among those who have enriched Hindi spiritual literature by their poetical imagination, moral and devotional fervour, and philosophical insight.

6. Tulasidās might well be regarded as a literary *Avatār* of Vālmīkī as he clothes in Hindi garb most of the ideas of Vālmīkī.

7. Sūrdas is the greatest Hindi lyrical poet. He is most remarkable for his lyrical and devotional poetry.

8. Mirabai's description of the Dark Night of the Soul, as well as her vivid account, after the Spiritual Dawn, of her having come in possession of the Jewel of God, have left a deep impression on Hindi spiritual literature.

9. Raidās is held in very great esteem for the brilliance of his intellect, his high poetic capacity, as well as his devotion to God.

10. Nānak is at his best in earnest appeal for turning every moment of our life to spiritual use By his philosophico-mystical insight, he sees the unity of the internal and external God, as well as he perceives God in all things, and all things in God.

## (9)
## Marathi Saints

1. The great mystics of Maharashtra have produced a literature which shall continue to be the wonder of all humanity, which cares at all for an expression of mystical thought in any country without distinction of creed, caste or race.

2. Jñāneśwara is the type of intellectual mystic; Nāma-

deva heralds the democratic age; Ekanātha synthesises the claims of worldly and spiritual life; Tukārāma's mysticism is most personal; while Rāmadāsa is the type of active saint.

3. Jñānadeva is a Saint who appears to us from the beginning to the end of his spiritual career, as a full-fledged Saint, a Saint not in the making but one already made. .. Jnānadeva is a light that dazzles too much by its brilliance.

4. Nāmadeva represents the emotional side of spiritual life. Nāmadeva's insistence upon the significance and efficacy of the Name of God is the strongest of all the Saints.

5. Ekanātha was a Saint,while he was yet a house-holder. He has brought about a unique reconciliation between worldly and spiritual life unattained either before or afterwards.

6. It was principally Ekanātha who made the ideas of Vedānta familiar to the men in the street. With Jñānadeva philosophy had reigned in the clouds; with Ekanātha it came upon the earth and dwelt among men.

7. Tukārāma was the citizen of the world and for that matter a citizen of the spiritual world... He not merely realised God himself but brought God-realisation within the easy reach of all.

8. Rāmadāsa called people's minds to the performance of duty, while the heart was to be always set on God. Rāmadāsa tells us time and again...it is only when our efforts are backed by devotion that they are likely to succeed.

9. While Nāmadeva and Tukārāma... called back the

attention of men from irreligion to religion, Rāmadāsa raised upon the foundation of religious faith an edifice of national greatness.

10. Tukārāma devoted his entire life to the spiritual upliftment of humanity; Ekānātha gave himself over to social reform; political achievement redounded to the credit of Rāmadāsa; while Jñāneśwara spent his life in utilising his devotional temperament for the mystical upliftment of the world.

## (10)
## Kannada Saints

1. Karnatak Mystics occupy a very high place among the great God-realisers all over the world From my study of Marathi and Hindi Mystics, I can assure you, that Kannada Mystics stand on a level, which is in no way inferior to that of the other Mystics. In a way, we may say, that in many ways they stand even on a higher level . They have contributed a good deal to the world's mystical thought.

2. These great Kannada Mystics evidently divide themselves into two schools, the Saivite and the Vaiṣṇavite ... I may point out that the Śeṣa is welcome both to the Śaivas and the Vaiṣṇavas;Śaivas make Śeṣa into a necklace which decorates neck of their God,Śiva and Vaiṣṇavas look upon Śeṣa as the resting couch of Viṣṇu. So, it is Śeṣa who reconciles these two schools of thought.

3. " By the expression Haridas, we must understand none else but Purandardas. " Thus does Vyāsrāya praise his disciple.... He began with Saguṇa, later equated the Saguṇa with Nirguṇa and ultimately he became a Yogi and a Mystic.

4. One of the greatest of Karnatak Mystics and for that

matter of the whole world, Mahipati, is rarely surpassed in his vivid description of the spiritual experience. His heights of spiritual experience, his profundity of thought, and his powerful style, leave an everlasting impression on the mind of the reader.

5. Kanakadās seems to have had wonderful intellect even though he belonged to the so-called lower communiy. He was undoubtedly a great devotee.

6. In one of the best songs in Kannada literature, Vijayadās has beautifully expressed his spiritual experience...This splendid poem gives us, in brief, the whole history of spiritual life.

7. Sarpabhūṣaṇa was a very humble man. He was a brilliant, poetical as well as a mystical writer.

8. Nijaguna Sivayogi was a great philosopher as well as a Mystic.

# Heart - Homages

1 Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.
2 Sri. George B. Burch,
3 Sri. Kakasaheb Karkhanis,
4 Sri. Gangadharrao Deshpande,
5 Smt. Vijayadevi V. Apte.

and

Others.

*Om*

## "Sri Gurudev"

An Ocean of Bliss,
And Moonshine of Peace,
A Cloud of Compassion
Showering full Grace.
Rich treasure of Wisdom
A Shrine of Meditation,
Electrifying Energy
Of the Spiritual Sun,
Inspired by the Lord
Possessed by His Might
Plunged dead - drunk
In Divine Delight
Dispeller of fear
Destroyer of danger.
Saviour of his disciples
Guide and Inspirer.
Glory to Gurudev !
All glory to His Grace !
A Spring perennial
Of eternal Bliss and Peace

— *Manohar.*

*Note* :-
It is a modified English version of my Prayer in the "*Geeta - Gurudev*"

# (I)
# Welcome Address

**Presented to Sri Gurudeva**
**RAMCHANDRA DATTATRAYA RANADE, M. A; D. Litt;**
**by the students and the staff of the Parashuram Bhau High School, Jamkhandi, on 3rd July 1956, the seventieth birth anniversary of Revered Gurudeva.)**

*Revered Gurudeva,*

At this Amṛta Mahotsava of our Sovereign Saint, we, the students and the staff of this ancient institution feel supreme joy in extending our heartiest welcome to you, at your Alma Mater. We hope and pray for more such happy returns.

This blissful day of your seventieth birth anniversary revives gloriously proud memories of old, associated with your student life in the school. The year 1902 made history, by giving us, in you, our first Shankar Seth Scholar, ranking second at the Matriculation Examination, in the whole province. Further, your winning at the M. A. Examination in 1914, the Chancellors's Gold Medal, a most coveted prize,

in the Bombay University, brought greater glories to your Alma Mater. Your high erudition and astounding versatility, peep out in every page of more than half a dozen enduring works, produced by you. To-day, your word is a gospel and your mystic touch turns every thing into divine gold. The East and the West combine in admiring and adoring you.

Ever Since your studenthood in this institution, you have been the darling of your Alma Mater, your Great Guru, Śrī Samartha Bhāusāheb Mahārāj and the Supreme Lord. The life Divine you have been living, is a perennial source of inspiration to us and to posterity. Revered Gurudeva, we have in you a Master Mystic, having a rare happy, harmonious combination of Divine simplicity and serenity. Aptly had your learned Principal Bain pronounced words about you : "You are one of the six greatest men of the world." We, the young Parashuramians, had prayed for the dawn of this blissful day; and our beloved Gurudeva, you have fulfilled our longing by giving us your Darshana to our heart's fill.

Our heads bow down at Your Venerable Feet, devoutly asking for your benign blessings to enkindle in us the Divine Spark; for, we feel sure, then, of ushering in a still more glorious future for our institution, turning it into a big Spiritual Centre too.

*Our Most Venerable Gurudeva,*

We ever remain,
Yours in ardent admiration, deep devotion
and self-less service,
The Students and the Staff of the
Parashuram Bhau High School, Jamkhandi.

Jamkhandi Date : 3 rd July, 1956.

In the Sanctum Sanctoram of Gurudev Mandir : 8-12-1965

Shri G. V. Tulpule ( left ) : Shri J. V. Parulekar ( centre )
Dr. S. Radhakrishnan ( right )

At the samadhi of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj at Nimbargi (13-1-1957)

Sri Gurudev with Some of the disciples.

(2)

## Attainment of the Vision Divine

*( By : Dr S. Radhakrishnan ).*

( His Message

*On the occasion of*

THE THIRD PUNYATITHI OF GURUDEVA RANADE)

*( 5th of June, 1960 )*

I am honoured by the invitation to say a few words on the release of the late Professor R. D. Ranade's last work on " Pathway to God in Kannada literature " on the 5th June, which happens to be the anniversary of his passing away. I enjoyed his friendship and affection from the time I met him in 1925 at the first Indian Philosophical Congress in Calcutta. His simplicity, his integrity, his sweet and affectionate nature impressed all who came into contact with him.

For many years he taught philosophy at Poona, at Amalner and at Allahabad. Philosophy for him, was not a profession but a consuming passion. He thought, not merely with his intellect but with his whole life.

He had remarkable linguistic equipment. Apart from his mastery of English, he knew Greek and German and had a command of Hindi, Marathi and Kannada. He made very valuable contributions to our knowledge of mysticism in Marathi, Hindi and Kannada literatures. He expressed his deepest convictions in words and ways intelligible to the ordinary man.

Professor Ranade tells us on the very first page of this book that " mysticism is a way of spiritual life, which binds all humanity together. " Religion, at its highest, is a matter of direct experience of ultimate reality, an experience which is intuitive, super-sensuous and different from normal modes of thought. On the strength of that experience we cannot make ontological affirmations. The intellectual apprehension and formulation of transcendent truth belong to a different order than the experience which they attempt to explain. The immediacy is not there, the conviction of finality is no present. The need for uttering the unutterable leads to ambiguity of utterance. Professor Ranade tells us that " no real mystic usually gives expression to his own experience. " An American poet, Emily Dickinson says ; " Tell the truth but tell it slant".

The way to attain the experience is by meditation and prayer. All the religious thinkers ask us to know the deepest in us.

Ninna nijava ni nodo ( know thyself )

Know the truth of your Self. God dwells in the silence, the cave, the guhā of the heart. He is Guheśvara. Without a retreat into the self, true human life is not possible. The Buddha withdraws into the forest. Jesus goes apart into the desert for forty days. Muhammad gets into his tent.

Professor Ranade gives a detailed account of the

different modes of approach adopted by the saint-singers of Karnataka. There are a few references to his own experiences.

The God-realised souls form a blessed community-Anubhavamaṇṭapa working with love for afflicted mankind. History is the progressive embodiment of the vision of human brotherhood culminating in a society of free spirits, a body of men dedicated to seeking truth. Ranade spent his life in the pursuit of this ideal. He reminds us of the verse in Śaṇkarācārya's Mohamudgara :

*guru-caraṇāmbuja-nirbhara-bhaktaḥ*
*saṁsārād acirād bhava muktaḥ*
*sendriya-mānasa niyamād eva*
*drakṣyasi nijahṛdayastham devam*

Cultivate a strong devotion to the lotus-feet of your preceptor, thereby get freed soon from samsāra. Only by a control of the senses and the mind does one attain a vision of the Divine seated in one's heart.

## ( 3 )
## Harbinger of Renaissance.

*( by : Dr. V. K. Gokak )*

Dr R D. Ranade was one of the gifted sons of India who achieved great distinction in several departments of life - educational, intellectual, constructive and spiritual. Karnatak was the home of his physical and spiritual birth and evolution. Maharastra and Utter Pradesh provided the setting for his career as a professor and educationist. The world came to know him through his " Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy." Numerous pupils and devout disciples grew in the intellectual and spiritual sunshine that he scattered so prodigally around. He had his own share of the cross and the crown, the fortunes and misfortunes of life. He bore the cross cheerfully and wore the crown with a great and deep sense of humility. Dr Ranade was as great as a philosopher as he was a mystic. His influence in the circles of the elite in India is due to the remarkable combination of two distinctive gifts— philosophic discrimination and vision.

Dr. Ranade was an illustration of the Indian Renaissance and he did a great deal, constructively, intellectually and spiritually, to promote it further towards its own fulfilment. He founded spiritual centres in Nimbal, Sangli and Allahabad. He made contributions of enduring significance to Indian philosophic literature. And he left behind him a large and cultured fraternity of disciples practising a living spiritual discipline which had been handed down from master to disciple in the past and which found in him its most illustrious exponent and representative.

Nothing else brings better the rich authenticity and pervasiveness of the Renaissance than the emergence of a whole tribe of saints and pioneers simultaneously and continuously in all parts of India. The richness and variety of this emergence strikes a student of the Renaissance not less profoundly than the advent of Shakespeare and his tribe which made Elizabethan England a nest of singing birds. The humanist and the sceptic will continue to turn his back on this splendour, urging that what is hailed as light is really a relapse into the "primeval darkness" of the Vedic times. But the student of the Ranaissance who has responded to the fusion of reason and imagination, of intellect and intuition, of work and worship, is sure to be fascinated by the infinite wealth that it has brought to India.

The self-discovery of the East, the meeting of East and West in a grand moment of synthesis, the presentation of this synthetic vision in English which is a world language, the coming together of the occidentals and orientals who have consanguinous spirituality, the reinterpretation of a living spiritual tradition so as to bring it in line with the modern world - these are some of the features that characterise the Indian Renaissance. This is amply illustrated in the life of Dr. Ranade.

A re-interpretation of ancient and mdieval Indian poetry is also a feature of the New Age. If Dr. Ranade gave us a classical and scholarly account of ancient Indian thought in his Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy, his volumes on the "Pathways to God" may be described as romantic in their approach to medieval Indian poetry. It is a fascinating experience to read the interpretations of the poetry of the mystics of North India, Maharastra and Karnatak. He shows there how the experience embodied in this poetry is the same as that of mystics all over the world. Many obscure songs suddenly spring to life in the revalatory light that he sheds on them by referring frequently to his own experience. This is specially true of the account he gives of the mystic poets of Karnatak. He penetrates through various philosophic terminologies, and diverse credal formulations to the core of experience that lies enshrined within them and brings out the universal significance that underlies various forms and beliefs. Tnis serves to underline the unity of Indian thought that persists through a bewildering variety of forms.

The frail body of Dr. Ranade houses a great soul He was a great builder. teacher and scholar and a serene philosopher and mystic. For several years he hardly lived on any other nourishment but tea But he needed no other food :

> For he on honeydew hath fed
> And drunk the milk of paradise.

I was privileged to come into contact with Dr. Ranade on a few occasions. As an undergraduate in Dharwar as far back as 1928, I thrilled to his eloquence when he lectured on the Upanisads. Through his close disciples who were my friends, and through Prof. N. G, Damle, I could get vivid glimpses of the manner in which he was evolving into a great Seer. He presided over a lecture that I delivered on Sri

Aurobindo at the residence of Srimant Rajasaheb of Sangli. As the then Dean of the Arts Faculty of the Karnatak University, I arranged for one of his extension lectures. I had the honour of receiving him at my residence at Dharwar. And when he passed away, I had a strange intimation of it in a dream, a few hours before I read about it in my morning newspaper. I treasure these memories of the great man and I am sure that thousands of individuals all over the country do so in their own way.

The dawn of the Renaissance is slowly but inevitably breaking into day. I salute Dr. Ranade as one of the harbingers of this Polar Dawn.

(4)

# A Loving Personality

*( By Professor George B. Burch )*

( Professor George B. Burch teaches philosophy at Tufts College. Metford, Massachusetts. In 1953-54 he and his family were in India, to which Professor Burch came to discuss philosophy with Indian philosophers. prominent among whom was the late R. D. Ranade. In sending this article Professor Burch writes :-

"It is customary, when a great man dies, to publish eulogies of him which, written under the stress of the occasion, are often uncritical and exaggerated It may be better to wait a year or two. If he still seems great in retrospect, his life can be appraised in a more objective spirit. R. D. Ranade is a man whose stature, in my estimate, has only grown in restrospect. "

We are glad indeed to publish this vivid and interesting account based on the author's own recollections as a

tribute to the late R. D. Ranade Ed. ) ۞

Ramchandra Dattatraya Ranade was born in 1886 at Jamkhandi, given a mantra by a guru named Bhausahib at the age of fourteen and educated at Deccan College. He acquired only a distaste for Philosophy here, where the Professor of Philosophy assigned no reading except Aristotle's Ethics, Wallace's Kant, Mill's Logic and Martineau's Ethical Theory, and lectured from the same notes for twenty years. But in other fields he got a fine education. He specialized in mathematics, studied English with Clark and learned Sanskrit from Pathak. He learned the techniques of scholarly research from Rawlinson, to whom he taught Sanskrit in exchange for tutoring in Greek. His most influential teacher was F. W. Bain, later Professor of Economics at All Souls' College, an Englishman with a deep appreciation of Hinduism, whose beautiful stories of the Rajput era, written in the form of pretended translations from Indian originals, evoke visions of India even by their titles ( A Digit of the Moon, A Heifer of the Dawn, In the Great God's Hair, The Ashes of a God ). When Bain left Deccan College, a spokesman for the students said, in a public eulogy, that they had learned more philosophy from him than from the Professor of Philosophy and more literature than from the Professor of Literature. It was from Bain that Ranade received a vision of eternal beauty and truth.

While in college he began his life-long habit of devoting three hours a day to meditation ( even during examination periods, as one awed disciple told me without really expecting me to believe it ). In 1908 the year he received his B. A. from the University of Bombay, he began having the mystical experiences which continued throughout his life. At first he found these experiences confusing. He went to Banaras to

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۞ This article was first published in the August 1959 Number of Aryan Path. This introductory note is by the Editor of Aryan Path.

discuss them with the well-known Annie Besant of the. Theosophical Society and she assured him that they were real.

He became a fellow of Deccan College after graduating, was appointed curator of manuscripts in 1912, and received the M. A. in 1914 During this period he became interested in philosophy, first of all in Aristotle's philosophy. With his command of Greek, he undertook the ambitious project of making an exhaustive commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics. This project did not get very far, but it made a good start. The Metaphysics begins with a critique of the pre-Socratics, and the beginning of the proposed commentary produced a series of articles, eventually published separately on various pre-Socratic philosophers. These studies had a considerable influence on his later thought.

In 1914 he was appointed Professor of Philosophy at the quasi-monastic Fergusson College in Poona. In 1916, when his friend the philanthropist Pratap Seth founded the Indian Institute of Philosophy at Amalner, Ranade gave technical advice and selected the books for the library. Academically this was the happiest period of his life.He later recalled with pleasure his intimate association with the excellent students at Fergusson College Personally it was a tragic period. The great influenza epidemic of 1918 took his mother and his wife, and left him in a state of poor health from which he never completely recovered, and which compelled his retirement six years later.

Bhausahib died in 1914, and was succeeded as guru by Ranade's fellow disciple Amburao. In 1921 Ranade established an ashrama in the outskirts of the small village of Nimbal. ( This is some thirty miles north of Bijapur, a city which Ranade urged me to visit, not only to accept an invitation from one of his disciples but also to see the Gol Gumbuz, a building he considered " Sublime, " whereas the Taj Mahal

was merely " beautiful." ) When Amburao died, Ranade was persuaded, although reluctantly, to undertake the responsibilities of the guruship. He moved to the ashrama in 1924, assumed the spiritual guidance of his former fellow disciples, and also began initiating disciples himself. I was told in 1954 that he then had about 2,000 disciples, living in various parts of India For them he was their gurudeva. their teacher, to be reverenced like a god His three years at Nimbal were fruitful not only spiritually but also scholastically. Besides the works on the pre-Socratics, he published a comparative study of Greek and Sanskrit, an edition of Carlyle's essay, two books on Indian philosophy, a four-volume Source Book of Maharashtra Saints in Marathi,a monumental Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy and a volume on The Creative Period for a proposed eight-volume history of Indian philosophy

His health somewhat improved; he accepted an appointment as Professor of Philosophy in the University of Allahabad in 1927 He stayed there, as professor and sometimes dean, for nineteen years. but he never enjoyed teaching there as well as he had enjoyed teaching at Poona. He lived in a big rambling bungalow in the suburbs. When I went to Allahabad for the Kumbha Mela in 1954. although Ranade was not there, I stayed in this house as Pratap Seth's guest, browsed in his fine philosophical library ( with its complete set of Mind ), and met some philosophy students living there. Ranade's book on Mysticism in Maharashtra, based on the earlier source Book, was published in 1933, and he continued his research in the field of popular mysticism by extending it to the oral tradition in Hindi. Whenever he met anyone, in any walk of life, he would ask him if he knew any songs, and if he got in reply a song with any spiritual significance, he would write it down. In this way he gathered material for his book on Hindi mysticism, published in 1954 under the title Pathway to God in Hindi Literature. Eventually he added a volume on Kannada mystics, thus completing a

trilogy on the mystical traditions in three vernaculars with which he was acquainted.

He retired from teaching at sixty, but stayed at Allahabad another year as Vice-Chancellor of the University. After 1947 he resided at the Nimbal Ashrama, but usually returned to his Allahabad home for the cold season. His personal life became extremely ascetic. I was told that he gave up eating entirely, except for drinking tea with milk and sugar. He devoted his time to meditation, scholarly research and writing and the spiritual direction of his disciples. It was at Nimbal that I met him in 1954.

When I went to India to study Vedanta, several persons spoke to me of Ranade as the best teacher of mystical philosophy. This was not my chief interest, but I became curious about the man personally. A physics professor described him as the most advanced person he knew. and refused to express an opinion as to whether he was a jivan-mukta. I was warned not to try to visit him at the ashrama, where the life was too austere for a Westerner. I did have doubts about wanting to visit him, but on very different grounds. Hindu gurus as a class have a mixed reputation, some times seeming ( at least to a Westerner ) to be arrogant, pompous or conceited. I had heard of gurus, including quite famous ones, who kept themselves in seclusion, refusing to see their own disciples, let alone visitors. But I took a chance, wrote Ranade a letter asking permission to visit him and was invited to come

The man I met was the opposite of what I had expected Small, slight and frail, a mere wisp of a man whom you would expect the slighest breeze to blow away, he was nevertheless vigorous not only spiritually and intellectually but also physically. His brisk, sprightly step was characteristic of his whole lively personality. Pomposity or unction would be impossible in this animated person. Hypocrisy would be

impossible in this humble man, who kept his perspective and sense of humour even though surrounded bv disciples for whom he was divine. He was frank and friendly.. eager to talk with me, to learn as well as to teach, to discuss both his intellectual interests and mine. After telling me about his education, he asked me to tell him about mine. Rapport was established when we discovered a common interest in the pre-Socratics, and we exchanged offprints in this field. We became close friends immediately. I did not get the impressions however, that this was anything special about me. I believe that he was that way with everybody. But, for all his humility, a visitor at Nimbal could never be mistaken as to which man was the guru. Ranade's spirituality shone clearly through every look, word and act. He did not have to pretent to be a saint, because he obviously was one.

The ashrama was a group of five small stone buildings. The only neighbours were a " criminal-caste " group living in eight mud huts - fine, dignified people who, as I found, would do favours for me but would not take baksheesh. Nearby were a miraculous never - failing well which Ranade had dug on a spot revealed in a vision after the old well did fail, and a ten-foot pit into which Ranade used to go for his meditation on days when the ashrama was crowded. Living in the ashrama were Ranade, his second wife, his daughter, his two small grandchildren and aboui fifteen disciples. They came from different social backgrounds : a young raja, a retired Postmaster General, college professors, doctors ( one of whom Ranade's physician, was trying to get him to supplement his tea with orange juice ), lawyers, business men. clerks, the local station-master, a Harijan ( who, coming to Ranade in distress when his children were starving on his forty rupee school-teacher's salary, was assisted by him to get a hundred-rupee social worker's position ). Tney had been drawn to religion by various influences-one, a Madras doctor, through the frustrations of bureaucratic regulations; another, a lawyer with

an international practice, through the company of saintly men he met during three years in jail. This lawyer said Ranade had instructed him to see that I did not starve. Actually they went to considerable trouble for me, obtaining canned food they thought I would prefer to their usual fare and other conveniences for my comfort. While I neither requested nor especially wanted this special attention, I was touched by and appreciative of this hospitality toward a self-invited guest.

The day began at six, when the disciples assembled for devotions, chanting a hymu to the guru. We were expected to imitate the guru's practice by meditating together for three hours, but actually began leaving after about an hour. In mid-afternoon a bell, indicating that Ranade had finished his own spiritual exercises, summoned us to his presence for readings and discussion, followed by the ceremonial burning of camphor, inhaling the smoke and distribution of prasad. Each evening someone gave a talk, and there was a final chant before retiring. The hymn to the guru ("Jai guru Jai Guru Jai Guru Jai"), accompanied by cymbals, was chanted before photographs of Amburao, Bhausahib and the latter's guru's tomb ( no photograph of him being available). In their own homes, at least those I visited, the disciples also had photographs of Ranade. I am sure they had him principally in mind when singing " Jai Guru ", but there was no picture of him, nor was he himself present at these devotions. It any one ever made any gesture of veneration in his presence, I did not observe it.

Interesting and edifying as these spiritual exercises were, my philosophical conversations with Ranade were more so. His philosophy, which he called Beatificism, meaning the search for Beatitude as Self - realisation, was a mystical philosophy in the tradition of Vishishtadvaita and Bhakti - marga. He rejected Advaita and Jnana-marga as dangerous teachings opposed to mysticism. One day a disciple

recited a humorous poem on " Ten Great Saints, " in which the eulogy of each Saint was qualified by a statement of the defect in his sanctity. The ten saints were Prahlada, Dhruva, Narada, Vyasa, Shuka, Bhishma, Arjuna, Valmiki, Hanuman and Uddhava; in the case of Shuka the defect was that he was an Advaitin. All speculative philosophy, according to Ranade, is uncertain; all we can know of metaphysics is that all things come from God and tend to return to God. What we can know is the Self.

The means of Self-realization are fourfold. First, moral behaviour both the prerequisite for, and the evidence of, true mysticism. Second, the company of good people - hence the importance of life in the ashrama, Third, a guru. Ranade rejected the theory, often advanced, that the guru chooses the disciple, and maintained that the disciple must seek and choose his guru. (When he told me this, a sudden emotion swept over me. Had not providence, or Karma, brought me to this venerable man, probably the most spiritually advanced person I shall ever know, to whom I was already bound by ties of mutual affection, in order that he should be my spiritual preceptor ? Should I not ask him then and there to give me initiation ? I rejected this impulse, however, and in retrospect am sure that I was right. He could only have been embarrassed by so intemperate a suggestion, since initiation doubtless requires a preliminary discipline, while from my point of view I, as a Christian, already have my satguru in Christ. ) Fourth, meditation-intellectual, moral and mystical. The all-important thing is love of God, which is a response to his love for us, and this is attracted by the moral goodness resulting from our own efforts. This, I take it, is the " monkey theory " of salvation : to be saved we at least have to hang on. It is by devotion, not deeds or knowledge, that we are united with God. When, after returning to America, I was asked to give a lecture on contemporary Indian teachers, I spoke of Vinoba as teaching the way of action, Malkani as

teaching the way of knowledge and Ranade as teaching the way of love.

To love your family and your friends and, above all, God was Ranade's doctrine and Ranade's life. Spiritual meditation and mystical contemplation were the central activity of his daily life He was a mystic in the perennial tradition of the mystic saints. Did he then attain their final goal of mystical union with God ? The answer must be, No, unless it was after I knew him. He told me that he had never yet enjoyed the " unitive experience " described by the great mystics. To me that frank and humble statement was far more impressive than the exaggerated claims to extra-ordinary experiences made by some gurus and holy men.

Ranade saw me off at the station with expressions of friendship and devotion and an invitation to return, bringing my family, the next time we were in India, but that time never came. He ended his long life full of fame and favour. A seventieth-birthday celebration in his home town Jamkhandi was observed with typical Hindu ceremony : a civic address. a portrait unveiled, a volume of articles published, congratulatory letters and cablegrams. The invitations described him as "world renowned philosopher-mystic." I do not believe that he enjoyed that sort of adulation, merited though it was. When he died in 1957, Shrimati Ranade received letters of sympathy from the President and Vice-President of India, rajas, governors. Union and State ministers, institutions and individuals in India and abroad.

Much as I appreciate Ranade's spiritual and intellectual achievements, it is his loving personality which I remember best. Surely for many, as for me, he was a friend never to be forgotten. For his disciples he was much more. For India he was one of her great men. In India, as also in other countries, there are many great scholars engaged in various researches, many great philosophers with deep insights into reality,

many great mystics with ineffable visions, many great teachers who inspire their pupils, many great souls whose integrity and personality are radiant But we seldom see one person who is all of these at once. Such a one was Shri Ranade, one of those rare spirits who show us how human nature can be.

## ( 5 )
## Sri Gurudeva's Guidance and Glory
( *By : Padmasri Kakasaheb Karkhanis* )
### ( i )
### My Double Conversion

During 1910 Sri Gurudev had come to stay in his house at Jamakhandi for a few days. His usual study went on there as well Generally he got his books read by some reader. His reader at that time, was my friend Sri Nath Mhaskar. He was then reading the works of Swami Vivekanand for him. Along with him I also used to go to the house of Sri Gurudev and listen to the talks about spiritual life as well as about the inspiring incidents in the life of Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj.I gradually developed a liking for them. The maxim that company influences the attitude of man. proved to be true in my case as well. Sri Gurudeva's (then called Ramabhau) close association began to produce a salutary transformation in my attitude.

Sri Ramabhau was then regarded as a brilliant scholar

by one and all at Jamakhandi. He had been also a subject of loose talk as disciple of Sri Maharaj. I cared very little about these opinions of the public, either for or against Ramabhau. As I was daily observing him, I was very well impressed by his personality. During this period I once asked him : "Ramabhau ! Have you seen any Divine Visions?" My conception of 'visions' at that time, was influenced by the descriptions of visions in the Gurucaritra. Sri Gurudev replied to my question in the affirmative. I then requested him to let me know the nature of one such vision. Thereupon he asked me : " Have you read Gita?" Yes, I replied. " Then you must be remembering the verse 'Divi sūray sahasrasya' and others ? I have got the constant vision of such an effulgent Light described in it." This reply brought about an entire change in my traditional conception of a vision. A totally fresh conception about the same dawned upon me. My notion about spiritual life underwent a drastic change. I felt an urge to know the means of getting such visions. With the guidance of Sri Ramabhau I soon approached Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj and got myself initiated by him and entered into the blessed fold of his disciples. This took place a little later.

During his stay here, Sri Ramabhau once came to my house all of a sudden. After some formal talk he asked : "What is your future programme?" At once I replied : " I want to become a Vivekanand. " Thereupon he quietly said : " Very good ! But if you really want to become a Vivekanand, is it not necessary for you to make the requisite preparation? " To this I asked : "What sort of preparation is necessary ? " Sri Ramabhau said : " You will have to receive higher education in the College. Don't you think so? Please consider this matter seriously". I then said : "Ramabhau ! don't speak in this indirect way. Just tell me frankly whether I should join the College. " He replied : " I can only say that it would be helpful to you in the pursuit of your ideal. I only wish that you should think properly about it. " When I heard these words I immediately told him : " There is no question of thinking

now. I have just decided to join the College. Only ask dear Anna that I wish to join the Deccan College and not the Fergusson College as the authorities there are hostile to Lokamanya Tilak." Sri Ramabhau agreed to do so and I thereafter joined the Deccan College.

One factor in the incident still continues to pain me. I feel constant repentance for it. Though Sri Gurudev was a simple Ramabhau then, I had entertained a very high regard for him. But I had not the capacity to know his real greatness. Neither did I know the high stature of Swami Vivekanand. What a fool was I to speak like that before such a towering person? This dart still pierces my soul.

## (ii)
## His Spiritual Greatness

In the year 1920, I had the good fortune of staying with Sri Gurudev at Incagiri. Sri Gurudev was residing then near the Samadhi of Sri Maharaj for the recovery of health, for nearly one year. From the spiritual point of view that happened to be a blessed year for me. Because I could then observe the day to day life of Sri Baba and Sri Gurudev. Every minute I could actually visualise what penance is like. I could also observe there the embodiments of spirituality. I had the pleasure of hearing from Sri Gurudev several of his brilliant spiritual experiences. I have tried to publish them in my recent Marathi book about Sri Gurudeva's Reminiscences. Here I propose to share a couple of them with the readers.

Once Sri Gurudev told me at Incagiri : " So far as my personal elevation is concerned, I have attained the supreme spiritual goal. Hereafter, things may take their course according to the will of Sadguru." " My personal spiritual goal has been attained " means, in the words of Jnanesvar, " *Taralo, aralo, ātā uddharalo gurukripe* " - " I am saved ! I am saved !

I am liberated through the grace of Sadguru. Now it rests with the grace of the Master, to grant me power to liberate the world." Such is the significance of these words of Gurudev. They show what a great spiritual height had been reached by him even as far back as 1920.

Sri Gurudev generally described his own experiences through those of other Saints. About his two great works- "The Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy" and "Mysticism in Maharastra," he once informed "In these two works I have not described a single experience which I had not enjoyed already I have described my own experience in the words of Ṛsīs and Saints."These very remarks were later on made by him, about his other two works- "Pathway to God in Hindi Literature" and "Pathway to God in Kannada Literature." This is a clear Indication of the rich variety and sublime grandeur of Sri Gurudeva's spiritual greatness and glory.

## (iii)
## Powers of Initiation, received by Shri Gurudev

The incident I am relating relates to year 1920. We four—Shri Baba (Amburao Maharaj), Gurudev, Jagannath Lele and I were then at Inchageri. One day, I was in my room (Tukaram Sutar's room), when Gurudev came to me. He told me that a sound of mingled, indistinct words was buzzing near his ears and asked me what it could be. I said, "What can I tell you ? Maharaj (Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj) may tell you." What else could I say ?

After about 7 or 8 days, Gurudev again came to my room and told me that the buzzing, indistinct sound had become clear. It was the sound of the Nāmās of different religious faiths (Sampradayās).

It was usual in Inchageri at that time to assemble in Baba's room after the night *bhajan*. On that day also, we went there Gurudev then told Shri Baba about the Nāmās he had heard. Shri Baba was overjoyed. He said " ನಿನ್ನ ನಾಮಕ್ಕೆ ನಾಮ ಆಗೇದ, ಇನ್ನ ನಾಮ ಕೊಡಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಆಡ್ಡಿ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಈಗ ಎಷ್ಟೋ ಮಂದಿ ನಾಮ ಕೊಡುತ್ತಾರೆ; ಅವರಿಗೆ ಹೀಗೆ ನಾಮಾಗದೆನು ? ( Nāmās have sprouted to your Nāma. Now you are empowered to initiate. At present there are some who are giving initiation. Have they any nāmās sprouted to their nāmās like this ?).

The nāmās thus received are *sabeej nāmās* · They have the potency to sprout ( in spiritual experiences ) and are received from heaven.

Gurudeva, however, did not give initiation till about 3-4 years after Shri Baba's departure. He started initiating after 17–18 years after he was thus empowered to initiate.

## (iv)
## "Aversion For Siddhis"

Shri Gurudeva once told me his experience as follows- " When I was progressing in my Sādhanā, a stage arrived when I was able to see the past and future of the person sitting in front of me. I grew restless thereby and requested the Maharaj that I did not want any of such *ṛddhi* and *siddhi*. I told him that I wanted nothing but Bhakti and prayed to him to stop all that. After this prayer of me those visions came to an end. " All such events happened in the life of Shri Gurudeva prior to 1915. He lived thereafter for about 42 years. He did not waste even a single breath as he always engaged it in Nāma-smaraṇa. So one can easily imagine how much spiritual power he must have attained during that long period.

I participated in the national independence movement in November-December 1922 when I was the chief of the

Svāvalambana Rashtriya Pāthashālā at Chinchawad ( Poona ) I was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for four months. Before I went to the jail, I wrote a few letters, one of which was for Gurudeva. He used to stay then in the house of Shri Bhaurao Nadagouda at the village Nimbal. After my sentence was over, I went to Alandi, had the *darśana* of the *samādhi* of Shri Jñāneśvara and proceeded to Bijapur. On my way I got down at Nimbal and went to see Shri Gurudeva Ranade. He told me that even before he received my letter he knew that I was in trouble, and that he had informed Prof. Krishnarao Gajendragadkar and Shri Jagannatha Lele accordingly. I asked him, " How did you know that ? ". He replied, " When I was in meditation, I heard the words ' Ganapatrao. Ganapatrao. ' So I thought that you must be in some difficulty. This was confirmed later by your letter that you were sentenced to jail for a period of four months. "

## (6)

# Heart Speaks to Heart

*( by Sri Gangadharrao Deshpande )*

## I

## Prayer for Peace

When *Guruvarya Rāmbhau Ranade* asked me last night, to give at least a brief talk this morning, I was greatly puzzled. I could not decide what I should talk about. During the last 55 years of my public life, I delivered good many lectures. I have addressed huge gatherings of thousands of persons, even for two hours at a stretch. But today, I don't wish to give such a lecture. I wish to lay bare my heart, to unburden myself this morning. It is a sin, no doubt, to talk without inspiration or authority. But it is a greater sin to disobey one's Master. Hence I decided to prefer the lesser sin and speak out my mind as desired by *Guruvarya*.

I have spent the last 55 years in national work, in public service. At first, I worked as a follower of *Lokamānya Tilak*, during his life-time. After his demise, I began to work as a

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⊠ Note: A free English rendering of talks during a sitting of Sri Gurudev in Mal - Bunglo of H. H. Rajasaheb Sangli on 18-12-1951.

follower of *Mahātmāji*. After the departure of *Lokamānya*, there was a keen controversy regarding the correctness and propriety of the opinions of both these leaders. My friends and fellow workers also differed a good deal about them. But I did not bother myself about this controversy. I thought that *Mahātmāji* was simply bearing the banner of *Lokamānya* ar.d decided to follow him.

During the last 55 years, I have worked quite honestly and sincerely. I have done many good things and at times, might have done some bad things as well I possess both merits and demerits, generally to be found in ordinary persons–possibly in a somewhat intense form. Without being vain, but with due deference to my self-respect, I can claim a lot of good things to my credit. But,with all that, for the last 4 or 5 years, I have been keenly feeling a need of mental peace, of inner satisfaction. Really peace is the fulfilment of life. But in the evening of my life, I have been pining for peace. This mental unrest of mine has greatly upset me. I don't get sound sleep at night. So the problem that confronts me is this. While engaged in national work, *Lokamânya* could enjoy peace, *Mahātmāji* could experience peace. They were not mentally disturbed like me. Why, then, should I be disturbed like this ? When I began to ponder over this problem, I found that the peace, enjoyed by *Lokamânya*, was the result of his faith in God. He had implicit faith in God. Very often I heard him utter the following words, during his lectures : " If God wills-If God blesses. " At times, he used to conclude his lectures with the following remark : " May God grant you the will to act up to instructions given so far. " In the beginning, I considered this to be, merely a mode of speech with the elderly persons. But later on, I actually asked *Lokamānya* as to why he talked about God, in tnis manner. *Lokamînya* replied: " Look here, God is the real doer; nothing can take place, but by His will. In spite of our utmost efforts, no work would succeed except through His Grace. " I was not very well impressed

with this answer then. *Mahatmāji* also had a similar faith in God-nay-it was more Intense than this. *Mahātmaji.* used to describe God as Truth and Non-violence, no doubt. However, like *Lokamanya* he also had an implicit faith, in a Mysterious Power, that transcended everything and ruled everything. I may say. by the by, this was the main reason that goaded me to follow *Mahātmāji.* Whenever I would launch upon a fresh venture, I used to ask myself : " What would *Lokamānya* have done under these circumstances? " And when I satisfied myself that he would have done the same thing that had suggested itself to me, then I used to begin the work. I never felt any difference between *Lokamānya* and *Mahàtmāji.*

I tell you once again, that *Lokamānya* had an unshakable faith in God. I once asked him : " Sir, what will you do after we get *Swarājya* "? He replied : If we get *Swarājya* during my life-time, I shall repair to the banks of the holy *Ganges.* take *Sanyāsa* in the place. where my grandfather had done so, and spend the remainder of my life, in meditation on God and contemplation on the Ultimate Reality". But he departed before the advent of *Swarājya.* Several of my colleagues also were denied the privilege of having a glimpse of *Swarājya.* But fortunately, I could have that privilege. My ideal of freeing my country from the foreign yoke, has been fulfilled, and now I am breathing the free atmosphere of *Swarājya* ..... My financial condition also is not bad . ... I have earned sufficient fame by now and have a good position in society. And after *Swarājya,* I could easily have shone in newspaper columns by engaging my-self in similar public activities. However, I am sorry to say that I don't have any peace of mind. I don't quite understand why I should not get peace, even though I have been successful in my family as well as my public life, and even when I am not without faith in God. I am therefore. anxiously in search of peace and tranquility. I have done good deeds so far, but I must confess that I could not rid myself of my defects. When I

begin to compare my merits and defects, I find that the latter out-number the former. I am stating this, not through a false sense of modesty. I am sincerely unburdening myself today, setting aside both pride and modesty. The consciousness of my defects has been weighing upon me. It has snatched away my peace of mind, and has left me greatly disturbed for the last few years.

Fortunately, about 2 or 3 weeks ago, *Guruvarya Râmbhau Rânade* came to see me, during his recent stay at *Belgaum*. We had no prior direct contact with each other. Even though I knew full well about his great scholarship, his pure character, his spiritual experiences I had no direct contact with him. When I came to know that he was coming to *Belgaum*, I wrote to him a letter, requesting him to spare some time for me during his numerous engagements here, so that I might find some solace thereby. Immediately I got a reply of assurance from him and accordingly, he did come to see me. During our talk, he informed me that he would soon be going to *Sangli* when I told him that I wish to see him again at *Miraj* at that time. I was, thereafter, extremely eagar to see him at *Miraj*. Hence I requested the *Rajàsàheb* of *Miraj* to intimate to me the date of his arrival there. Accordingly, I got a telegram from him as well as a letter from *Guruvarya*. So I could see him at *Miraj*, have the pleasure of hearing his spiritual talks as well as the blessing of his spiritual guidance. All these events have taken place during the last three weeks. But they have reduced my disturbance and have been gradually granting me some peace. I don't claim to have attained perfect peace, as yet. But I have got the satisfaction of getting the path of peace. *Mahatmaji* used to tell us: "I have not seen God: but I have discovered the path of seeing Him. That is the source of satisfaction to me." Similarly, I may say, that I have found the path to peace, which itself gives me a good deal of solace.

When I begin to consider my present condition, I feel

extremely sorry to observe the miserable plight of our young men today. I have very often mixed with the youth of our country quite freely. At first I advised them to prepare bombs and pistols and bring about political revolution. I was also engaged in similar activities at that time. Later on, I advised them to take part in *Satyâgraha*. Even now, I do mix among young men and talk to them. But it pains me to find that they have lost all faith in high ideals In fact, they have no ideals at all. Very often, I meet very intelligent students studying for B. A. and M. A degrees. When I ask them to let me know their ideals, they are dumb-founded. Why has such a state come to pass ? Why has the sun of the ideal disappeared from the horizon, producing darkness in the hearts of our young men ? Recently, when I read the following remarks of *Panditji* : " I don't quite understand the meaning of *Hindu Culture*., I was extremely pained. *Lokamânya*, *Mahâtmâji* and other great leaders of our land, entertained very high regard for *Hindu Culture*. If our leaders now begin to deny the very existence of such a Culture, what would become of our nation ? I, however, don't dogmatically maintain that *Hindu Culture* and *Religion* are superior to all other cultures and religions I do admit that they have got their own excellence But if our leaders begin to deny the very existence of *Hindu Culture*, I shudder to think of the future of our nation. Today our young men have no ideals to strive for. How, then, can they raise our nation ? You are all advanced in age and experience; you are all engaged in spiritual *Sâdhana* Since you are all superior to me, I don't wish to tell you anything But I want to tell my young friends, with all the sincerity I can command, this thing: " Friends ! You should never remain without an ideal. If you don't realise its supreme value at this stage, what would you do, when, in the evening of your life, you would be disturbed like me ? Who would then show you the path to peace ? Fortunately, I could get proper guidance at least at this late hour. What would be your plight? Hence, approach the person whom you revere most, and try

for the attainment of high ideals, and illumine your lives."

## (ii)

## Response of Assurance

( *by : Sri Gurudeva Dr. Ranade.* )

After such a fine lecture, really I should not speak at all *Sri Gangãdharrao* is senior to me by about 16 years. I don't think it proper to speak after him. However, I cannot but add a few words by way of expressing my feeling about it. Formerly, when I was quite young, *Sri Laxmanrao Chattre*, an acquaintance of mine, was residing in the *Nene Chawl*, Bombay, where *Lokamãnya* and *Gangãdharrao* used to meet. Since then, I have entertained a very high regard for them. Later on, they entered politics; I began to study philosophy. Hence there was no contact between us.

Really God – realisation does not depend upon prolonged *Sãdhana*. We cannot be sure of having the vision of God after performing *Nãma-japa* for 25 crores of times God-realisation requires a tenderness of heart and an intense hunger for it. When these are present, God is near. At this advanced age, the tenderness and yearning of *Gangãdharrao*, is really remarkable. - unique. Such a softness is rarely to be found in oldage. Where this exists, God is not far away.

*Sri Gangãdharrao* referred to the remarks of *Pandit Nehru*. The word "Secular" carries a double meaning. It means " irreligious" and it also means " super--religious ". *Panditji* had used the word in the sense of " irreligious. " But recently through the contact with persons like *Devi Ãnandamayi* and *Justice Dar*, a change has taken place in his ideas. Really the word ' secular ' ought to be taken to mean ' super-religious.'A Universal Religion should be established by leaving aside all religions and creeds. In 1936, *Sir R. P. Parãñjãpe*

had delivered his Presidential Address of the Liberal Federation at *Nägpur*, in which he had advocated the banning of all religions. By way of reply, I had stated there that the social and political handicaps resulting from the differences in religions and creeds, can be overcome in two ways : Firstly, by bidding good-bye to all religions; secondly, by establishing a Universal Religion, ... I would ever maintainthat the advent of a Universal Religion is the only proper panecea.

I was glad to hear the heart-felt wordsof advice which *Gangädhurraoji* has just given to our young students. The *Bhägavatu* also has given the same advice :

कौमारादाचरेत्प्राज्ञः । धर्मान्भागवतान् हि तान् ।

" The wise should practise *Bhägavata - Dharma* from the early age. " But we cannot say how far this advice would be really effective. Unless our heart feels an attachment for spiritual life and dislike for material pleasure, such advice would never be fruitful. As soon as the feeling of ' dispassion ' arises in the heart, we must at once renounce everything and take up to spiritual life Says the Upanisad :

यदहरेव विरजेत् तदहरेव प्रवृजेत् ।

" The moment the feeling of dispassion arises, that very moment one should renounce everything " and begin to practise spiritual *Sädhana*. Even though we feel dispassion in oldage, it does not matter. If we perform our *Sädhana* with proper intensity, God will surely bless us. even in our oldage If *Gangädharraoji* performs *Nämasmaraṇa*, for one or two years, with the same zeal and intensity. with which he served our nation for so many years, God will not fail to bless him, with His Grace.

## (7)

## Gurudeva Ranade-My Father

*( By : Smt. Vijaya V. Apte. )*

Almost a new era begins with the advent of Sri Gurudeva in the field of Indian Philosophy; or we may say that he is one of the brightest stars shining in the philosophical firmament of the resurgent India of the 20th century. His appearance on the scene was very necessary when India was undergoing the bewildering and dazzling changes by the contact with the Western Development of Science. A perplexed mind ultimately finds solace only when it is able to see within itself, with a heart full of faith, in the Ultimate Power. Thus the pathway to the philosophical and mystical sphere was opened by such illustrious seers who had shunned the bonds of old dogmatism. Here I can mention the names of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Sri Gurudeva Ranade. Gurudeva Ranade was the builder of the modern spiritual empire. He stands before us as an intellectual and mystical collossus. As Dr. S Radhakrishnan says- " He taught not merely with his intellect but with his whole life. Philosophy

for him was not a profession but a consuming passion. My life is richer for having known him." Even the Philosopher-King. like Dr. Radhakrishnan accepts Sri. Gurudeva as the unparalleled Mystic of the day.

Recently Dr. Burch from America ( Head of the Deptt. of Philosophy, Massachusetts University ) wrote : " Had not Providence brought me to this venerable man, probably the most spiritually advanced person I shall ever know—to whom I was already bound by ties of mutual affection in order that he should be my spiritual preceptor ? "

The world is verily aware of his unique greatness. Still it can know only the outward appearance of such uncomman personalities; as Sri Ramdas says,

गुप्त आहे उदंड धन, काय जाणती सेवक जन ।
तयासी आहे ते ज्ञान, वाह्यात्काराचे ।।

Now that we have lost such a precious diamond, the only way left to us, is to enlighten ourselves with his writings and his teachings.

Writing unveils the Man. Gurudeva Ranade was a lover of deep study of any topic taken on hand—may be of Literature, Science, or Philosophy. He used to go to the original sources of the matter—nay, even of the ' words ' also and that is why he could enhance the treasure of the 'word-kingdom '. He coined many new words in the philosophical and mystical literature. He was a Seer-Scientist of life and an apostle of virtues. Moral character is the basis of all success, A real spiritual life can only be built on the moral basis. Thus virtues meant everything for him: " Character is the milk of life. "

There was no superficiality in his writings. He was a voluminous writer and contributed original doctrines to the

world of philosophy; Logical development, consistency, brevity and accuracy are the characteristics of his style making it unique. He used to sum up his ideas in the end so that the true lover of knowledge could get a clear picture of the views propounded in the beginning. His style was lucid. He had a mastery over English as well as over Latin, Greek and German. He was well acquainted with the sainty literature in almost all Indian Languages and all the more with that in the *Alma Mater* Sanskrit. A profound scholar of Sanskrit that he was, his *Magnum opus* " The Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy " gives many new interpretations of the original Sanskrit texts. He used to say that we should study every problem in the way of the Kantian Critique. All his writings are constructions through critical expositions. His was a synthesising approach. A spirit of reconciliation runs through all his literature. For example : we can see the five antinomies in the Gita reconciled only on a view of Reality which regards the realisation of God as the be-all and the end-all of all Existence. He himself says, " This mystical view of Reality alone will enable us to reconcile all the intellectual dogmas that have infested the philosophies of the world. What we feel and what we realise should alone constitute our philosophy " And all this can only be achieved by God-Devotion which is the central thread of all virtues. The Christian and the Platonic virtues are all shown to be arising from one guiding virtue viz " भक्ति, " so too, the virtues enunciated in the Gita. Thus Devotion alone would lead to the realisation of Self which constitutes the foundation and the peak of al Thought and Existence. The final verdict on the two controversial doctrines in Indian Philosophy i. e ज्ञानोत्तरकर्म and ज्ञान-कर्म-समुच्चय is that ज्ञान is not an event but a process. Thus Gurudeva Ranade combined in himself, in quite a unique way, the different roles of Literator, Philosopher and a great Mystic. He was a mystic all his life.

Simplicity was a significant trait of his personality. He

has an abounding love for all who came in contact with him- whosoever he may be, a prince or a man on the street. He had a special affection for the students who stayed with him. His love for his disciples is also well-known. Everyone who came near him, thought that he was loved most by Sri Gurudeva. That was the one and the only one feeling that everybody had for him His serene smile and sanctifying presence, spread peace, love and good-will everywhere. He appreciated only the virtues in others without noticing their drawbacks. He was a saint of this type:-

परगुण-परमाणून्पर्वतीकृत्य नित्यम्
निजहृदि विकसन्तः सन्ति सन्तः कियन्तः ॥

This gave an impetus to enhance the goodness in others. This is why all his disciples believed that their spiritual teacher loved them most.

How can I be an exception to the rule? Having the privilege of being his only daughter, I am sure that all the goodness and happiness I have achieved in my life are due to the blessings and dignified love that have been showered on me by His Grace. People may think that a mystic who has realised God will not be able to play his role properly as a father or as the head of the family just like a worldly man. All the saints and the intellectuals of the world, like Tukaram, Ramadas, Mira, Kabir or Socrates, quite justify the above statement. But I can say with pride that my father well synthesised the worldly & the spiritual heights. His was not mere Renunciation, but his was Renunciation in action. He remained in the world but was not of it, as the adage goes, पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा. My father never forgot his duty and love towards us. The only thing was that his ways of expression were altogether different from those of a common man. And that is why people thought, that he had no family-life at all.

On the contrary, I can declare that mv father's attitude towards us was just the reverse to what others thought of us. लोके भाविले ते उलथविले. My revered mother and myself never expected of my Venerable Father an attitude of a common man, because we were quite aware that we were members of the family of a great Saint. We were actually living in the spiritual atmosphere that my father spread all round. Even the parrot in मन्डनमिश्र's house could speak fluent Sanskrit. Then what to say of the members of his family ? I am proud that we were ever inhailing the spiritual atmosphere.

I shall now deal with the following topics :-

1. His view of worldly life.
2. His moral standard.
3. His spiritual backing.
4. Gurudeva as a Mystic.

Regarding his view of life, people very well know how from his childhood he had a keen bent of mind for God-Realisation To describe his life as such, will take a lot of time and it has been already done by many a writer in Marathi, English and Kannada. To be brief, I would say that he led a very simple and noble life with uncommon ways. His nature was sweet and affectionate towards all who came near him, even with the poorest inmate of the house. He used to get annoyed at times, but got himself calmed down immediately. He appreciated everybody and praised his achievements. What to say of his only daughter ! I still remember his joy when I passed mv first degree examination ! It is a very minor thing, but the expression of love and joy that he had for me is more valuable to me than any thing else in the world. Though he was not bound by etiquette, worldly ties, even then he used to observe the necessary etiquette without fail. Once when I asked him whether I should accept a post of a lecturer in Gwalior he wrote to me to seek the permission of my father-in-law, Sardar Apte-in the first place, and then to

accept the post. Once in Jamkhandi, his birthplace-in 1956, I delivered a lecture in a women's meeting. He was surprised to see the big audience and just for fun said, "*Śakë*" ( that was how he used to call me ) are you going to attract more people than I do ? " The death of my only younger brother, a child of three and half months, was a bolt from the blue to all of us. My mother was very seriously ill at that time. I was all alone. All of a sudden he came in and patted me, saying "*Śakē*, inscrutable are the ways of God. Wny do you weep ? I am everything for you. " One cannot imagine what I felt when I saw the mountain of courage incarnated before me. धीरोदात्त that he was, his face was filled with the glow of Divine Luminosity. I will never forget this incident in my life. When I studied Sanskrit in my B. A. I read *Shakuntala's* going to her husband's house in अभिज्ञान–शाकुन्तलम्. But when I left my dear father's place after my marriage, I was reminded of *Kalidas's* words for *Shakuntala :*

यास्यत्यद्य शकुन्तलेति हृदयं संस्पृष्टमुत्कंठया ।
कण्ठस्तंभितवाष्पवृत्तिकलुष चिन्ताजडं दर्शनम् ।।

वैक्लव्यं मम तावदीदृशमिदं स्नेहादरण्यौकस: ।
पीड्यंते गृहिण: कथं नु तनयाविश्लेषदु:खैर्नवै: ।।

A Ṛṣi like *Kaṇwa* could not control his paternal feeling for the adopted child, then what to say of Gurudeva ! !

The disciples of Sri Gurudeva know how much importance he attached to high moral standard and how vehemently he used to keep to it. Morality according to him was the basis of perfect life. He had an utter disgust for the worldly show He was full of a spirit of humbleness and led a life of tranquility, truth penance, insight, strength, and right pursuit. He himself says that unless these conditions are fulfilled, the

aspirant after spiritual life, may never hope to realise the Self. He never directly told what he was or what were his views, but a true thinker could discern his views, in his description of some great saints. And so mere moral preaching rbaft of moral practice could have no place in his schema. The meetings or the 'sittings', or the discourses which were held in his presence with his friends and disciples, were quite enough for our guidance and moral equipment. Actually I feel that whatever ज्ञान he imparted to the disciples in general, it was meant for everybody's wellbeing. If not direct, it was an affectionate indirect guidance to me from my Revered Father. His moral standard was so high and his personality so hallowed that one could approach him only with humility.

Further his spiritual backing was all the more valuable. It is needless to say more about it because all his followers know how much spiritual support they received from their Guru. Should I not call it an exclusive privilege for me and my respected mother? Let me express here, that most of the spiritual discourses have not been missed by us. Howsoever secret they might have been or if I am to put it more frankly, every such secret discourse was arranged in such a manner that we could get guidance from it. After many days, all of a sudden, he used to ask my mother and myself some such questions regarding the earlier discourses, only to test whether we were attentive. The object was only to lead us towards the higher path of God-Realisation. He used to enlighten us sometimes with his rememberance of Guru Sri. Bhausaheb Maharaj, or sometimes silently with a spiritual experience. अनुभव. Once in 1956, when he was to go to Jamkhandi–he was having a spiritual discourse with many *Sādhakās* at Nimbal. I was there, and all of a sudden an idea occured to my mind-' Sri Gurudeva is leaving this place to participate in the *Amṛt Mahōtsava* to be held in his honour at Jamkhandi–and now who will protect Nimbal ?" All of a sudden, I saw a lustrous halo encircling His Holy face

and he was smiling serenely ! Thus he used to come to our rescue.

Lastly, come to Gurudeva as a Mystic. He says in his Karnatak Mysticism " Mysticism is a way of spiritual life which binds all humanity together." As I have said before, the world values him as a great Mystic and God-realiser He was engrossed in meditation all the time except when he was doing intellectual work. Very little time was given for his routine work He worked for the philosophical field so devotedly and undauntedly that he actually re-drafted a page eight days before his passing away. As Sir Radhakrishnan has aptly said " He not merely taught philosophy but He lived it." The whole life of a Philosopher-Saint was thus spent in the pursuit of God-realisation with rational, direct, personal, and spiritual experience. All the philosophical works-the Constructive Survey and the three Pathways in Karnatak, Maharashtra and Hindi Literatures, the Gita as the Philosophy of God-realisation, and the other works of his, go to show his profound, life-long study and intuitive experience. " Mind is purified, Intellect is clarified and the Soul is sanctified by the study of the Gita." He says elsewhere : "A state of Beatificism is itself our liberation. It is not to be found after death, but here and now. Mysticism denotes that attitude of mind which involves a direct, immediate, firsthand intuitive apprehension of God". This he says on the strength of his own moral, spiritual and mystical experiences. But "this state of God-realisation is due to the कृपा of the spiritual teacher सद्गुरू," said Sri. Gurudeva. "The preceptor who shows the Truth in its real form is called a *Sad-Guru*;" सत्याचे गुप्त रूप जो दाखवतो तो सदगुरु. This view is upheld by all the great mystics of the world : ज्ञानेश्वर, तुकाराम, कबीर, महिपति, पुरन्दरदास, St.Teresa, Plotinus and others. He led a pure life of mysticism and taught a full-fledged morality for the individual and life of Absolute Good to society. If each and everybody could achieve his own

Good by following the mystical path, then one day, the whole world would surely and unmistakably reach the Ultimate Good. Thus we see that He placed Mysticism on a Pure Philosophical basis. His writings prove him to be aGrammarian of Mysticism, परमार्थपाणिनि. Whatever the knowledge we have achieved about the mystical methods is only due to, I am sure, the affectionate and spiritual guidance of a great Saint-Father. One cannot judge the merits of a great man unless one lives in close touch with him for many days in continuity. In that respect I am fortunate enough to have spent most of my life - time with him. What to say of my respected mother who has lived and let live others with him for 40 years. To be fully aware of the greatness of a great man, one must become like him.

तुका म्हणे अंगे व्हावे ते आपण.
तरीच माहात्मान येईल कळो।

It is not possible and is not at all practicable for a common man. Even then some idea of His greatness is gained by being the member of his saintly family. I am rather forced to conclude here because the flow of these spiritual remembrances is unending. I am reminded here of Longfellow's unforgetable lines-

" Lives of Great men all remind us
We can make our life sublime,
And departing leaves behind us
Foot-prints on the sands of time. "

My most Revered Father has built the Spiritual Empire-and has shown us the Divine Path to be followed rationally. Thus he has left behind him for the aspirants a vast legacy of Divine Brotherhood to catch up the " Pilot Perrenial ".

## (8)
## How I Found My Gurudeva

*( By : Dr. N. S. Christian )*

A seeker of Truth since my boyhood, with Religion and Philosophy, Mysticism and Yoga as my hobby, I have been a friend of *sâdhus* and *fakeers*. Often I fell a victim of deception and fraud; still the orange-clad attraction swayed over me. I read a large number of books and visited *āśramas* in search of mystic knowledge. I have a profound regard for our Land of Wisdom, its unbroken chain of saints and sages, the Ancient Scriptures and our rich cultural and spiritual heritage.

During those days I had been practising Kuṇḍalinī Yoga without a Guru to guide me, by just following instructions given in books on the subject. One night, during my deep meditation, I experienced a terrible psychic shock, pertaining to the rising of Kuṇḍalinī-Śakti, the details of which are too long to be recorded here. Since then, I had experienced a strange mental and bodily distress, ranging from a sense of fulness and intoxication to a fear of impending death, with fluctuations in my pulse, and varied and vague symptoms,

probably due to a disturbance of my autonomic nervous system. Sleep had completely disappeared and often I got into ecstatic states and trances with the development of visual and auditory signs pertaining to Yoga. My friends, who took me on a jeep to Ganeshpuri, have been witnessing them during our journey. We visited Swāmi Nityānanda late in the evening and I implored him to bless me. He placed his hand on my head and exclaimed, "Acchā, Jāv, Abhī milegā Jāv". We reached Bombay late at night and rested at the Archaeological guest rooms situated on the Fort at Sion. The next morning was Āṣādha-Ekādaśī. I woke up early at 4 A. M. and was reciting "Lalitā-Sahasra-Nāma". My friends were snoring in their slumber after the tiresome jeep-drive the previous day, a distance of 250 miles in torrential rain all along the journey. On reaching the closing lines which mean, "Imperishable embodiment of compassion, Light in my darkness" etc. while reciting the thousand names of The Divine Mother of the Universe, I fell into a trance and lost myself in ecstacy with a vision of the Mother. My friends woke up to see me moaning with a flushed face, my eyes pouring out tears. They were greatly perturbed until I recovered after nearly half an hour. The whole day I was in a blissful state. Dr. Kulkarni noted fluctuation in my pulse and he took me to our friend, Dr. Tulpule, eminent cardiologist and Professor of Medicine at the J. J. Medical College, residing at Dadar, himself a great devotee and a pious soul. The learned doctor found nothing abnormal in me. The cardiogram and X-Ray revealed a perfect heart. I was experiencing a sense of fulness and intoxication and a feeling that my body would burst out. I requested the Doctor to prescribe medicine. Dr. Tulpule advised me to see Gurudeva Ranade of Nimbal and said that there was nothing wrong with me. We returned home. I continued my Sādhana and had two memorable dreams. The first was Śrī Nityānanda who took me on his lap and threatened to slap me when I suddenly woke up. The second was Gurudeva Ranade, whom I had never seen before, appearing and telling me in Marathi,

"*Doctor, tumi Nimbâḷalā yā, mi samādhi - yoga dākhavito*" meaning, "Doctor, you come to Nimbal. I will teach you Samādhi-Yoga."

Three weeks later. I went to Nimbal with my friend Deshpande guided by Dr. S. G. Tulpule, *M. A., Ph. D.*, Head of the Department of Marathi, Poona University, the illustrious biographer of the Great Master, and who happens to be a cousin of his name-sake in Bombay. At the 'Abode of Peace' I found my Master, the Divinest Soul I have ever met. His mystic touch set me free from all my spiritual ailments. Every-time I visited the *Āśrama*, I rejoiced in the sanctity, aura and affection of Gurudeva. He graciously initiated me in the Supreme Yoga of Meditation on God's Name. He gave me Christa-Nāma without distracting me from my Iṣṭa-Devatā and added me to his large family of devoted disciples.

Gurudeva Ranade's writings on mysticism and Yoga are masterly, revealing the highest attainments in the History of Speculative Philosophy. He has placed before the aspirant, secrets of incalculable value, effectively leading him into the 'Pathway to God'. His comparative study of the mystics of different lands and religions, is extremely fascinating and informative. His original method of explaining difficult themes in simple language is unique, depicting in a systematic manner, the incentives, preparatory methods, experiences and achievements of the Saints and Sages of all ages and countries with the sources of his writings which are so full and complete. His 'Survey of Upaniṣadic Philosophy' is a scholarly exposition of the truth and richness that came out of the Age of The *Āraṇyakas* His incomparable treatise on the Gītā as a Philosophy of God - realisation is a work of great value to a Sādhaka on the Pathway to God. The book gives in a nutshell, the various commentaries on the Greatest Scripture of Spiritual India, and through the different views expressed by the various scholars and devotees of the Lord of Kurukṣetra, Gurudeva Ranade places before a student of Yoga, the avenues of

God-realisation and the diverse forms in which God reveals Himself to a seeker.

Gurudeva Ranade was a Saint who conquered hunger and thirst. He proved ih his life what Christ had said, that "Man doth not live by bread alone". For many years he was sustaining himself on a few cups of tea a day. He defied bodily ailments and refused all medicines and treatment when he happened to be ill. As the Rsis of Old, he shunned publicity and lived to perfection, the teaching. "Let thy light so shine before men that they may see thy good works and glorify thy Father who is in Heaven."

The afternoon of my arrival at Nimbal, I was sitting in a gathering of devotees with Gurudeva Ranade inspiring and thrilling us with his Spiritual discourses. All of a sudden he summoned me affectionately to his side and asked me to recite a sacred hymn. During my recitation of a verse from the works of the Saints of Saiva Siddhãnta, I fell into a trance with the experience of Samãdhi which Gurudeva had promised me in a dream. Wnen I regained myself, I found lying down in ecstasy, with my eyes full of tears of joy, and my head on the lap of my Master who sprinkled water on my face and was passing his frail hands on my back. I got up and sat when he asked me, " Is that what you wanted?" I replied, " I do not know. Gurudeva I But whatever you have given me, is a blessing". I returned home and one night, after my meditation, in a semi-sleep state, I saw Gurudeva in front of me. He said to me, " Doctor, your head is full of some worms and I shall remove them" and he pulled out long threadly worms from my left ear and threw them out. Ever since that memorable event, all those disturbing symptoms which I had developed after my shock during Kuṇdalinī-Yoga disappeared for ever. Then I realised the beauty of having a Spiritual Master and appreciated the writings of the Great Saṅkarãcãrya on the subject. Thus I met my Gurudeva.

With the dazzling brilliance of the Rising-Sun, the Master's face reflected the vast Universe. Everytime I sat beside him amidst the devotees at Nimbal with his favourite green shawl covering his body, he appeared to me to have resembled The Ancient Mystic Parrot, reciting the Infallible Vedas He has been a perfect preceptor after the Ideal of Śri Śaṅkarăcārya's Vivekacūdāmāṇi description of a Guru, without the slightest taint of human egoism. He was an embodiment of humility.

The Spirit of The Universe, encased in a pale ivory frame and a frail body, mostly skin and bone, Gurudeva Ranade resembled a feather-stripped bird, a pair of God-intoxicated eyes, glowing compassionately in their hallowed sockets, situated below elevated eye-brows, the symbol of triumph in his life-long *tapasvā*. an extremely affectionate heart, tirelessly pouring out its life-giving nectar of Spiritual Wisdom in warbling words of divine melody Gurudeva was a self-sustained Angel of The Lord in brief, "God in flesh and blood."

The Master has left us and departed to the Abode of the gods whom he resembled, "Mingled after death. with the Whole Universe, whose voice is on the rolling air and who stands in the Rising Sun and who may be seen in star or flower or wherever the eyes may be cast."

"He is made one with nature : there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of the night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself wherever that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains from beneath and kindles it above."

## (9)

## Angelic Personality

( *By : S. N. L. Shrivastava* )

Whoever has come in contact with Dr. R. D. Ranade cannot forget him till the end of his life. His was an angelic personality, radiating joy and peace and spiritual light. An electric smile ever played on his lips and his eyes shone with a brightness reflecting his inner illumination. I never found him ruffled or sour or bitter or stooping to petty things. He was above all narrow considerations of caste, creed and community. People felt uplifted in his presence and the more one came in contact with him the more he sought his presence. He was an *ajātashatru* ( one who had no enemies ), and a friend of everybody ( *sarveṣām yo suhṛnnityah* ), a seraphic soul " with malice toward none and charity for all. "

When Dr. Ranade came to Nagpur to deliver the University Extension Lectures on the Bhagwad-Gita sometime before 1930 ( I do not remember the exact year ),I had the first opportunity of seeing and listening to him. I was then an undergraduate student in the Government College there, then known

as the Morris College. I had offered Sanskrit and Philosophy for my B. A. Examination and was particularly interested in philosophy. I do not think I followed Dr. Ranade's lectures very closely; but his personality and erudition impressed me. I still remember how my attention was particularly rivetted on Dr. Ranade's explanation of the sentence of the Gita *adṛṣṭa-poorvam hṛṣitosmi dṛṣtvā bhayena ca pravyathita mano me.* Explaining this sentence Dr. Ranade said that when a mystic has his first vision he is beside with joy but also overwhelmed with fear at the unprecedented sight. The confident tone in which Dr. Ranade spoke, smiling joyfully all the time, assured me that his explanation was backed by his own mystical exoerience at first hand. I could not help feeling that I was in the presence of a man who was not only an erudite scholar but a man of spiritual illumination as well. I decided to join the Allahabad University for my post-graduate studies in Philosophy. During the academic sessions 1931-32 and 1932-33, I was a post-graduate student of philosophy under Dr. R. D Ranade at the Allahabad University. It was during these years that I came in very intimate contact with him, meeting him very frequently, sometimes almost every day.

Ranade was a teacher of teachers. He had his own method of finding out the abilities of students. To all students who joined the post-graduate classes in philosophy he asked them to write philosophical essays of their own choice On my joining I wrote an essay on the Mandukyopaniṣad under the caption " The Psychological Basis of Advaitism". Prof. Ranade was beside with joy when he read it. " What is your age ? " he asked me. " 21, Sir " I replied. " No " he said, " Your age is 42, for your essay evinces maturity of that age." He at once forwarded that essay with a note for publication in the *Vedanta Kesari*, Madras, where it was duly published. That was my first philosophical publication.

Once I approached him for suggesting me books on Modern Western Philosophy. He gave me a lengthy list of

books, pointing out particular chapters in many of the books where particular topics were notably dealt with. I was simply astounded by the vastness and thoroughness of his learning. Ranade was global in his outlook. Though deeply rooted in Indian thought and culture, he was abreast of the latest currents of thought in Western Philosophy of his times. He always advocated a " correlated study of Eastern and Western Philosophies. "

Philosophy with Ranade was not merely an intellectual pursuit, but also as he often used to say, a way of life. In his own way of life, Ranade was, to my mind, an exemplar of a true Indian philosopher.

## Evening Meditations at Draupadi ghat

Gurudeva Ranade's life was a life of absorption in meditation. He was a Dhyan-Yogi *par excellence*. I can best describe his life as a personification of the following verse of the Bhagwad-Gita :

विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्कायमानसः ।
ध्यानयोगपरो नित्य वैराग्यं समुपाश्रितः ॥– B.G.18-52

Every evening Prof. Ranade used to go out in his car to the banks of the Ganges at Draupadighat for quiet meditation for some time. He would take us also with him. When the car reached the chosen spot, Prof. Ranade would ask everybody seated therein to get down and stroll along at some distance till the horn of the car was blown which was a signal for us all to return to him. The horn sounded and we would then all be seated again with Prof. Ranade in the car and return home. This was a daily practice.

Prof.Ranade's bungalow at Allahabad was a rendezvous for the meeting of all aspiring souls of all ranks in life. In

these gatherings sparks from the anvil of his luminous mind would often fly and enkindle spiritual fire in the hearts of the assembled. On one occasion he said in a very serious mood: "We must fill our lives with God!" On another occasion he said forcefully: "We must implant our feet firmly on the back of time," meaning thereby that we must transcend the time-consciousness and rise to an awareness of the ETERNAL NOW.

Dr. Ranade would receive all visitors to him very kindly and gracefully and would invariably offer tea. I never found him assuming airs before anybody.

Gurudeva is physically no more with us but the memory of his seraphic life shall ever remain green in our minds.

## (10)

## Mysterium Tremendum

*( By : Prof. S. K. Gupta )*

A sketch of a God-realiser by one who is not so. is hardly adequate. Unless the spiritual depth which Ranade attained is fathomed, one can hardly depict him appropriately. Before I attempt a description of Ranade from the standpoint of a non-realiser of God, I bow down in veneration to the ' Mysterium Tremendum ' that is Ranade.

I had the privilege of being his disciple for two years at the University of Allahabad. He taught Indian Philosophy in M A. ( previous ) class. I still remember his explanation of ' Tajjalan ' – the cryptic word from Chhandogya Upanishad. That from which all things originate, into which they are ultimately resolved and in which they live and have their being is ' Tajjalan. ' All powers in this universe, physical or mental, are manifestations of His energy. He is the essence of all beings. One who realises Him finds Him in all beings. As the Gita says. He abides in all multiplicity undivided.

Sarbabhutesu jenaikam bhãvamabyayam iksate
Abibhaktam bibhaktesu tajjnanam biddi sattvikam

( Chapter 18, verse 20 ) ۞

The full import of the term ' Tajjalan ' only a mystic can realise. And a mystic can explain it the best. Even though the listeners are non-mystics and so cannot enter much deep into its meaning, yet they are impressed. They are aware of a grand presence. An impression of a life time is created.

His success as a teacher was manifest all the more at the level of guiding research. It was a privilege to be a research scholar under his guidance. Original ideas and scholarly dissertations are specialities. First rate theses and books by research scholars are the outcome of his guidance. Dr. Chandra Dhar Sharma, the Author of that excellent book ' A Critical Survey of Indian Pnilosophy, ' was a research scholar under Ranade's guidance, when I was a student of M. A. Class. His book contains scholarly dissertations and views of Ranade. I happened to meet him, when he came to Orissa as the President of All Orissa Philosophy Association. He agreed with me that his book contains Ranade's views, which add much to its excellence.

Not only his scholarship but also his unassuming nature that made Ranade an attractive personality. It was a pleasure to meet him at his lodge. His affable nature and sparkling humour made his company enjoyable. One has the sense of something special about him. And yet during my two years stay at Allahabad, I could never know that he was a God-realiser. Several years after I passed out from Allahabad University, I happened to read his epoch making book " Pathway

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۞ सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षत ।
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ।।

to God in Hindi Literature ". I realised then that he was God-realiser. A book on God written by a God-realiser has an amazing depth and a wonderful charm. The reader realises, that here is something above the ordinary. Such a book stands out from other books on God, written by non-realisers. There is a book on contemporary Indian Philosophy, wherein the Philosophies of eminent modern philosophers of India including Ranade are given, through their own writings. I noticed therein that Ranade's essay surpassed all other essays in depth. The other essays have high philosophical acumen, but not the depth of Ranade, which is the outcome of God-realisation. All the books written by Ranade are outstanding. They bear the stamp of his deep spiritual insight. Though he is physically no more, one can feel the influence of that liberated soul, through his books. It can lead a person to immortality.

## ( II )

## A Glimpse of His Samadhi

*( By : Sri. V. G. Jamkhandi )*

It was some time in NOVEMBER 1954. Sri Gurudev Ranade was at Dharwar for a few days for delivering lectures on " PATHWAY to GOD in KANNAD LITERATURE " under the auspices of the Karnatak University. It was my rare privilege to be with him during this period.

I was initiated by Sri Gurudev Ranade only a few months before in July and I did not know much about his habits and modes of meditation. However, intimation had been given to me by senior Sādhakas that he would like to go out for meditation in a car. Accordingly, a car was kept ready for him so that it could be available any time he desired.

On the very first day after his arrival at Dharwar, at about 11-15 A. M., Sri. Gurudev said he would go out for meditation. He took with him a disciple-Sri. Bhaurao Nimbargi and also asked me to accompany him. So Sri Gurudev sat on the right side in the back seat and I was on the left side. Sri. Bhaurao Nimbargi and the driver were in the front seat. After

we drove about a mile along the Belgaum road, Shri Gurudev asked the driver to stop immediately. He had a peculiar and rather, inexplicable, way of asking the driver, in quick succession, to turn to right or left and then stop abruptly and only an expert driver could correctly follow his instructions. On one occasion, it happened that the car was stopped blocking the passage for other vehicles, but nothing came that way until his " Nema " was finished. After the car was stopped, Sri. Gurudev asked the driver and Sri Nimbargi to get down for some time, but asked me to sit for " Nema " — meditation there only along with him. I thought it was a rare opportunity for me to sit within 2-3 feet of Sri. Gurudev for meditation, though I must frankly confess, I hardly knew then what real meditation meant.

I then saw a most wonderful sight, which I had no occasion to see before, and have not been privileged to see thereafter. Sri Gurudev started uttering loudly and continuously " NARAYAN, NARAYAN ", and, within a minute he went into complete SAMADHI and seemed to be fast asleep. I was overwhelmed by a feeling of awe, reverence and wonder I had only read about Samadhi which great saints like Sr Ramakrishna Paramahaunsa are said to have experienced. but, I had never seen any one actually going into Samadhi. About 20 minutes later, Sri. Gurudev opened his eyes and said he had very good " Nema "—meditation—and asked me to call the driver and start back.

As soon as the car started, Sri. Gurudev asked Sri Bhaurao Nimbargi to recite some song and to my very great surprise he recited one by the great saint Purandaradas, in which the Divine Name given to me by Sri. Gurudev was eulogiged and was said to be the rarest privilege for any human being to secure. By the time the song was finished we reached home.

This is what happened and the whole episode, the context of facts and the close sequence, has made an indelible

impression on my consciousness. I am not going to offer any explanation for it, but my feeling is one of the most respectful and deepest gratitude to my SAD-GURU who, out of his infinite compassion, was pleased to give me an actual demonstration of spiritual samadhi, which could be attained by meditation on the Divine Name. He was also graciously pleased to convey to me, through the song of saint Purandardas, the unsurpassed potency and significance of the Divine Name and this conviction has been strengthened and reinforced in me during all this period and now it has veritably become a part and parcel of my being.

## (12)
## Come for Nama alone

( *By : Sri J. V. Parulekar* )

I had gone to Nimbal and was staying in a room, occupied by the late Dr. Padaki and Shri Sondur. Shri Aroskar also came there from Vengurla, probably for the first time. This was in 1953 and one day, we all had our lunch at about 7 p m. ' Nucchu ' ( small pieces of Jowar bread soaked in butter milk ) was served to all the persons. There was no other dish. Shri Aroskar, who was sitting by my side, enquired whether rice would be served and received a negative reply. Jowar bread was prepared; but it was not to be served until the whole stock of 'nucchu' was exhausted. Jowar bread was welcome to me but not 'nucchu'. When 'nucchu' was served for the second time, Shri Aroskar and I did not receive it. Shri Aroskar did not relish ' nucchu. ' at all and when we came out of the hall for washing our hands, he remarked : " I cannot continue to stay here any longer, if rice was not available. " I looked at him and said, " I too do not like " nucchu. "

The next day at about 3-30 a. m. Shri Sondur and I got

up and we sat for ' Nema ' ( meditation on the Name of God. ) Dr. Padaki continued to have sleep till about 6 A. M. and when we ended our ' Nema ' just about that time, he told us that he had no good sleep on account of bugs and mosquitoes and showed rashes on his arms He asked us how we did not suffer from mosquito bites and how we could sit quietly for ' Nema. ' I replied him that I had good ' Nema ' from 3-30 a. m. to which he said, " You are lucky. "

That day in the afternoon, we were having a ' sitting ' ( Satsang ) in the Dhyana-Mandir. Shri Gurudev was present. About 25 sadhaks, including Professor Damle, were present. It was about 2 p. m. Shri Gurudev pointed his fingers to two of the old sadhaks and said to them, " You were always moving with Maharaj (i. e. Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj). You tell us some reminiscences about him." Shri Hanmantrao Kannur then told us the following story.

It was in about 1904, one day morning. Shri Maharaj, as usual took a pot of water, left his room and proceeded towards open fields to ease himself. We both followed him with pots of water in our hands. We crossed some distance; prickly pear had grown here and there. Maharaj reached a spot where there was a small piece of stony land and he suddenly sat down for ' Nema ' on that spot. As there was prickly pear round about, we put down our pots and stood up, looking at Maharaj. He was fully absorbed in ' Nema ' Just then a scorpion entered on the body of Maharaj. Our heart beats became fast; we became nervous and were perspiring. What, if it stings? that was our fear. We were gazing at it. Maharaj had given us instructions that he must never be disturbed when he was in ' Nema. ' So we could not remove the scorpion from his body. Slowly, it got down from the other side and went away. Thereafter, when Maharaj got up we asked him, "'Maharaj," is this a place suitable for 'Nema' ? Maharaj replied, " What can I do ? I was helpless. As soon as I reached this

spot. I was compelled to sit down for " Nema. " That was the God's wish. " And then, he enquired of us why we asked such a question. We then narrated to Maharaj how the scorpion entered upon his body and how we became nervous and added. if it had stung you, how painful it would have been ? Maharaj then smiled and said, " When I was in ' Nema ' was it my human body ? No, no, it was God's and how can the scorpion dare sting God ?''

At this stage, Shri Gurudev stopped the two sadhaks, looked at Dr. Padaki and addressed the gathering :

' Look here. There are persons here who complain that the bugs and mosquitoes bite them and that therefore they are not having " Nema. " They do not even care to get up and sit down for "Nema. " Absorb yourself in " Nema " and even the scorpion would not sting. What of mosquitoes ?"

Dr. Padaki looked at me and suggested to me that this talk was meant for him. He felt very sorry. He became quite punctual in his ' Nema" thereafter and was very much advanced on the Pathway to God.

Shri Gurudev then asked one of the Sadhaks to sing a song The man started to sing about Shri Krishna and Sudama. Sudama goes to Shri Krishna with a handful of parched rice as present. Shri Krishna receives him with all affection and dignity and gives him full honours. Shri Krishna then asks Sudama, " What have you brought for me to eat ? " Sudama hesitated to tell him that only a handful of parched rice was with him. Shri Krishna presses Sudama, who at last produces the parched rice. Shri Krishna jumps to receive it and eats with relish.

At this point, Shri Gurudev stopped the song, looked at Shri Aroskar and said to the sadhaks, "If you want to stay

here and grow in spiritual advancement, here you will get Sudama's parched rice only. " Nucchu " you will get here. you must eat it with relish and spend your time in " Nema. " I give you what I can afford—Sudama's parched rice, Nucchu. You come here for " Nema " and not for good and spicy food.

The sitting ended at about 5 p. m. when Shri Gurudev. left the Dhyna-Mandir for his bath.

## (13)

## Gurudev As I saw him.

*( By I P. Singh )*

It was the spring of 1951. A fellow student of Philosophy Department in Allahabad University informed me that Prof. R. D. Ranade was going to give a talk on " Mysticism in Hindi Literature " later in the evening. I had heard a great deal about Prof. Ranade—as Head of the Department of Philosophy, as Dean of the Faculty of Arts and as Vice Chancellor of the University. I also had read some of his published works. But, I had never met him till that time. Even though I had an instinctive conviction that mysticism had reached great heights in Hindi poetry,I did not feel much attracted by the topic of the lecture. The desire to meet Prof. Ranade was, however, so powerful that I made it a point to attend the lecture. For some reason I don't remember, I reached late. When I entered the hall, the speaker was explaining the significance of Meera Bai's famous Bhajan - " *Jogi mat ja mat ja*". He was talking about a most crucial line of this bhajan. The earlier part of this line meant : " The path of love and devotion is strange. " Tne latter part had two known versions : ' *Mujh*

*ko gail bata ja* ' and ' *Mujh ko gail lagaja.* ' meaning " You show me the way " and " you escort me along the way ". Prof. Ranade was explaining how the difference between these two versions symbolized the two systems of spiritual discipline in this country, namely, the path of knowledge and the path of complete submission and identification with God.

This deep analysis, given in clear and simple words, in the characteristic swift delivery of Prof. Ranade, in which a lot of meaning was given by the expression upon his face rather than words, made me feel for the first time in my life that I was face to face with a sage, who deserved to be in line of the seers whom this country has produced since times immemorial. Thereafter. I kept a close watch on his speaking programmes and made an effort to see that I did not miss any of his lectures. But, this was not enough for me. Through a close friend of mine, who used to visit the residence of Prof. Ranade, I reached his place within a few weeks of my meeting him for the first time. Thereafter, I did not miss any excuse for going to his house. In the evenings, his drawing room used to be full of high dignitaries - senior Government officials, Judges of High Courts, Ministers of States and Central Government and big political leaders. The thing which impressed me most in these gatherings at his house was the absence of any forbidding sense of aloofness or artificial mystery which people of lesser spiritual merit in this country tend to create around themselves.

For the next two years, I continue I to see the great thinker, who was also an accomplished speaker and an expert in social engineering. But the craving in my mind to know Ranade the man, remained unfulfilled till the spring of 1954. When I became a lecturer in the Department of Philosophy, Ganga Natha Jha Hostel where I was staying asked me to quit the place as I was no more a student. Some friends of mine invited me to stay with them. But I instead, asked my friend,

Safish Chandra Verma, to explore the possibility of our staying with him. The same evening Satish came to me to say that Prof. Ranade had agreed to our request It was an unbelievable news and I shifted forthwith. I knew the discipline of staying in the house which without so boasting was an Ashram in the true sense. We all slept on thin durries on the ground and ate the simple meal prepared in the household kitchen. Of course, these things were not compulsory. However, the atmosphere in the house was such that we all felt happy and elevated in leading such a life. It was in a surrounding like this that in my inner most heart, I accepted Prof. Ranade as my Guru.

Gurudev used to be in meditation for hours every day. Occasionally, Madhukar Kumthekar would ask me to lead some special visitors to his room. I keenly awaited such opportunities. While it was not necessary for me to wait, once the visitors were in, I used to linger inside as long as possible, in an effort to imbibe as much of Gurudev's presence as possible. Gurudev as the host in his drawing room was completely different from what he was in his private room. His was an indescribable presence which caused an over-powering sensation on those who were around. Occasionally, he would only look at the persons for quite a few seconds before starting to talk. During this silence, one got the impression as if he was communicating.

The most striking feature of Gurudev's personality was his ability to talk and to think at the level of the person with whom he was at any time. It was an exhilarating experience to see the great mystic discussing the grossest problems of the people around him. On many occasions, I saw him agitated over the domestic problems of his peon-Bhagwan Deen, who used to live in the servant quarters and was like the Grand Chamberlain of the house-hold. It gave an ironical delight to see this great man upset over the fact that Bhagwan

Deen's cow had not been traced or his son had fared poorly in his school. Once these problems were resolved, Gurudev expressed a childlike happiness. Similar problems, personal and official, used to come to him from various quarters. He had time for every one.

Alongside lecturing in the University, I was also preparing for the Indian Administrative Service and Indian Foreign Service examinations. Gurudev used to ask me from time to time how my preparations were going. Early in 1955, when the results of the competitive examinations came out, I was in a dilemma whether to join the Indian Foreign Service, in which my name was first in the list or the Indian Administrative Service. I took my problem to Gurudev. He solved it for me in no time. He told me that knowing my temperament he would advise me to join the Foreign Service. I touched his feet and sent my reply to the Government of India. In the month of April, he gave me a most touching send-off to Delhi. I had an occasion to see him a year later. In between I was engaged. I sent him a letter seeking his blessings while entering the life of a householder. After my marriage, I visited Allahabad with my bride to receive his Āshirvād. That meeting turned out to be our last as I left India a few weeks later for training in diplomacy at ths Oxford University. Gurudev blessed us. He told me that in my service abroad I must remember always the great cultural heritage of India. I left him with the promise to see him as soon as I returned from my foreign tour.

At Oxford during 1956-57, Madhukar wrote occasionally to me about Gurudev's further studies in mysticism in Marathi and Kannada literatures. One morning I went to Blackwells, the well-known booksellers in Oxford, and requested them to order a complete set of Gurudev's writings for me. I returned in the evening to my room to find a letter from Madhukar informing me that Gurudev was no more. I cried like a child as I have done on very few occasions, indeed.

Our country's greatest wealth has been the unbroken chain of our saints and seers. While I have respect for thinkers and holy men whom I have personally met, I have an instinctive revulsion from god-men who are surrounded by a fence of pre-fabricated holiness. I am of the view that it is much easier for an ordinary man to appear saintly than it is for a saint to appear human. Gurudev Ranade carried his spiritual greatness in an invisible reservoir. The man in him was never sidetracked by the Sage.

## (14)

## ( Dr. Ranade's Magnetic Attraction )

*( By : S. L. Pandey )*

व्याख्यातोपनिषत्तत्त्वं रहस्यवादभास्क म् ।
श्रीरानडेगुरुं वन्दे ज्ञानभक्तिजगद्गुरुम् ॥१॥
प्रथमं ज्ञानदेवादीन् कवीरादींस्ततः परम् ।
व्याख्यातुं वसवादींश्च सोऽवातरन्महीतले ॥२॥
उमदीमुनिशिष्यो यो निम्बर्गीमतशङ्करः ।
सन्तो वदन्ति सर्वे तं भक्तवाणीविनायकम् ॥३॥
प्रणीतं सन्निधौ तस्य मया रैदासदर्शनम् ।
सम्पादितं च भाषायां रानडेदर्शनं पुनः ॥४॥
द्रष्टुं ज्ञातुं परं तत्त्वं रानडेजीवनं तथा ।
अल साधकसर्वस्वं रानडेदर्शनं मम ॥५॥

*(1)*

Between 1952 and 1956 I was in the close contact of Prof. R. D. Ranade. He used to come to stay at Allahabad every year from January or February to April and May. During

his stay I was privileged to meet him almost every day. So I got the opportunity of holding numerous sittings with him. But in each sitting I found him in new perspectives. The spirit in him was ever new. It was difficult to understand him completely. The only gain was, that I got a new inspiration to meet him again. Each encounter with his personality invariably led to another. Such was the magnetic attraction in it !

Today he is no more in his earthly coil. But still I continue to see him, or rather remember him, as I used to do during the fifties. Indeed hardly a day passes off when I do not see him in his meditation pose. His personality is, undoubtedly, immortal, not only because it is enshrined in his immortal works, but also because it is living in the lives of his numerous followers and disciples. I fully subscribe to the view of the great Hindi saint, Nabhadasa who says in his *Bhaktamālā* that love for God, the man who has this love, God and the teacher of the man—these four constitute one single personality. So wherever there is love for God initiated by Prof. Ranade or his disciples, there he is living in the very form his earthly existence signified. The continuity of his spiritual tradition, message and meditation has made him immortal in the true sense of the word. Those who have this sense can see him even now.

*(II)*

I have many experiences about him and it is not possible to record all of them here. So I shall describe only two or three of them and leave the rest for some future occasions. Prof. Ranade had attained to the state of desirelessness There was no trace of any desire or longing in him. He did not suffer even from the last infirmity of human mind, viz Love for fame. When Prof. S. Radhakrishnan became the Vice-President of India, I asked him to comment on his

appointment. He expressed his happiness over it and said that it augured well for the good of the nation. But when I asked him whether he himself wished to be the Vice-President or President of India, he replied emphatically in the negative and said, " I have dedicated my life to God-realization. Is there anything more valuable ? why do you think of the undesirable ? "

These talks with Prof. Ranade have revealed to me one thing, inter alia, that he was completely committed to philosophy and religion. Whereas his contemporaries and colleagues sought the reward of their services to philosophy and religion and left philosophy for political and social work, he did not do so, for, he was above the State. He was in the line of Indian Ṛishis and saints that were not enamoured of State and its power.

Such was his love for philosophy. I have yet to come across a teacher of philosophy who is as devoted to philosophy as Prof Ranade was. In fact he was philosophy incarnate. whosoever came in his contact became a philosopher in his own right. To know him was to know philosophy. To know the philosopher was to be a philosopher. *Brahma Veda Brahmaiva Bhavati.*

## (15)

## A Renowned Philosopher-Saint

*( By : Sri K. P. Kulkarni )*

One of our popular professors was Shri Rambhau Ranade. He taught us Carlyle's ' Heroes '. The town Kolhapur was a common bond that had fostered between us a sense of reciprocal kinship. Shri Bapurao Ranade, his step-brother, was a teacher to all of us and Rambhau made frequent trips to Kolhapur to meet him. Rambhau was also the maternal uncle of Narahari Damle, one of our close circle. At every University examination, Rambhau used to rank first and make a rich haul of prizes and scholarships. Naturally every one of his visits to the Damle's drew us thither in curiosity as well as admiration. Of course in the heart of hearts we were making mental notes all the while of the ideal scholar's style of walk and talk, his general turn out, his bearing, his fads and what not ! Being with him, at least for a while, was a matter of self-gratulation for us. That year particularly Rambhau had secured the much coveted Chancellor's Gold Medal for philosophy at the M. A. examination. Fergusson College, therefore, held for us the dual attraction of Dr. Gune and

Rambhau Ranade, Sharp of intellect, sweet in nature and unassuming in disposition he always impressed one at first sight. He was a personification of good nature. Physically however he looked somewhat frail But his profound erudition more than compensated this shortcoming. He used to be dressed in a very simple style. A clean bright ' dhoti ' , a pair of typical red Poona slippers (जोडा), a loose none-too fashionable shirt with thread buttons, a spacious tight collared shortish coat buttoned up straight, a fairly long muslin muffler(उपरणे) slung casually around the neck, a liberal saffron coloured paste mark on the yawning forehead, a headgear ( pugree ) typical of Poona perched at ease and indifferent on the crest, and baggy dark gown rather shuffling about in careless defiance of all order—in such a uniform if it could be called one, he used to enter the classroom walking unusually fast. Sometimes he carried a book or two extra in his hand while going to the class. The projection of his personality would easily profess the subject he taught-philosophy. From the moment he entered the classroom the stream of his eloquence flowed unfaltered till the bell tolled signifying the closure of the hour. The English he spoke was pitched low but delivered fast and was profound yet lucid. It was packed with meaning cast in classical mould, and somewhat ponderous yet within easy grasp of the student. It had about it the sanctity and majesty of the Ganges Every-time the student felt unmistakably that, he had heard something novel and extraordinary, that he had made a successful sojourn into the realm of the unknowable and that it was a charmed moment that had yielded some rare acquisition, an experience bordering on the ecstatic. There was a special Ranade touch about everything of his—unfolding the depth of Carlyle's thoughts or his superbly fluent eloquence, the uncanny tact of making the student gravitate towards him, the magic touch inducing love of literature in the student, and the masterly way of re-establishing the ancient tie of the teacher and the taught which seemed to mock at the

heterodox spirit of modernity. The impression that he made on us then stands out in bold relief even now, after a lapse of fortyfive years.

## The Upanishadic Sage :

Often Ranade asked the students to write essays and after going through them he returned them to the students with his own comments, suggestions and opinions, pointing out mistakes therein, if any. At times he also called them home for discussions over the subject matter of the essays. He had two spacious rooms constructed just beyond the Fergusson college Hostel; while his family residence was in Shaniwar Peth. Ranade often spent long studious hours in these rooms. We had nicknamed them as Carlyle Cottage. Students considered it a rare honour and privilege whenever they were summoned by Rambhau Ranade for discussions. By temperament Rambhau was a person of transparent candour. With a childlike innocence he used to mix with students shaking off typical aloofness, teachers are normally prone to maintain. This in turn imposed on the students a sense of embarrassment and awkwardness which compelled them to talk some garbled stuff, sitting under great constraint. At the cottage he looked a veritable skeleton of skin and bones flitting about in his 'dhoti' with its back strip amusingly shaggy and the bulging loops and falls in front helplessly dragging along and with his hair-lock a-top the crown, jumping about in unintentional mischief. Looking at him one felt one was squatting before some archaic Ṛshi for a session of sermons. Rangarao Diwakar ( who later became the Governor of Bihar ) was one of his favourite pupils. Like him many others whose essays earned his appreciation received invitations to the cottage from him. Once I too had the good fortune to receive it.

## The Saint of Nimbal

I was once summoned by Dr. Ranade to Nimbal in

connection with the examination of a thesis of my student. I arrived in Nimbal at about eight in the night. My host had already made careful arrangements to despatch one person to the station to receive me and have me lodged comfortably. About 10 o' clock at night Rambhau called on me at my room and as soon as he saw me he expressed his pleasant surprise saying, " Oh ! Is that you Mr. Kulkarni ! Well, I know, he is my student, a Fergussonian ! I still remember very clearly that excellent essay of his. " I was dumbfounded. A strange mixture of joy, gratitude and several undiscernible sentiments filled me. After brief formalities he left. I was very happy to extend my stay there for two more days in the enchanting, beatific atmosphere charged with the holiness of the saint Rambhau Ranade. When I left I had the contentment of a fulfilled mission

## (16)
## An Ideal Guru.

*( By : Surendra Prasad Garg )*

In 1952 I was introduced to Shri Gurudev Ranade Maharaj & went to Nimbal for his blessed *darshan*. By that time I had not been initiated and was against this tradition of Guru worship. When the disciples of Shri Gurudev recited verses in praise of Shri Gurudev & prostrated to pay respects to him, I did not approve of it & a number of doubts about the qualification of a Guru arose in my mind. It was a most lucky hour when Shri Gurudev gave a ring and all the disciples and devotees gathered in the hall and Shri Gurudev delivered his Pravachan on the qualities of a Guru without my asking this question to him. He said that a Guru must have the following qualifications :

1. He should be himself a self-realised soul having a deep insight in the *Shāshtrâs*.
2. Secondly a real Guru need not expect any thing from his disciples. He should look to the welfare of his devotees.
3. Thirdly, the personal life of a Guru should be above board and should accord to the injunctions of the sacred books.

He need not indulge in any practices not recommended by the *Shāshtrās* on the plea that he is omni-potent.

4. A Guru is omni-scient, all-powerful like God and he should be bestowing both worldly & spiritual benefits on his disciples.

On hearing this *pravachan* of Shri Ranade Maharaj, I, immediately decided to get myself initiated by him. I was lucky to receive initiation next morning.

In the afternoon, it so happened that the disciples & devotees were sitting for meditation along with Shri Gurudev. By an accident, the thunder struck upon the roof of the hall, went penetrating to the ground touching the head of one of the disciples. It was really a very horrible & frightening incident but none of the persons in meditation was affected. All kept on sitting silently for the duration of the meditation. At the end of an hour Shri Ranade Maharaj merely enquired about the matter and adviced measures conducting electricity to earth. He was quite indifferent to the happening.

The food served to the devotees was quite simple and Shri Gurudev used to bless it by looking at it, before it was served. He himself was a very abstemious eater & advised that minimum quality of food should be taken. Otherwise one will not be able to sit in meditation for a long time.

At that time I had been unjustly demoted to the post of Tehsildar after working as Sub-Divisional Officer & Assistant Secretary to the Government for about four years. When I was about to depart from the Ashram, Shri Gurudev of his own accord asked me when I would become an Assistant Collector i. e. S. D. O. What reply I could give to this question? But soon after my return from the Ashram, I was unexpectedly promoted to the post of Assistant Collector. It was only due to grace of Shri Gurudev. Even today, though I have to face a

number of difficulties in life, now & then. But they get resolved and eventually I find myself in quite easy circumstances, and have no liabilities & worries which generally travel a worldly person. It is all due to Shri Gurudev, who is always alive and takes due care of his disciples & devotees. I am quite sure that the grace of Shri Gurudev will grant me love of God & lead to Bhagwan after this *sthool* body dissolves.

## (17)
## He Lived Paramartha

*( By : Dr. P. D. Khanolkar )*

Dr. R. D. Ranade– a great mystic philosopher and a Spiritual teacher, *( Sadguru )* to a large number of aspirants in the South and also in the North attained *Samādhi* at Nimbal in his *Āśhram*, which has been a place of enlightenment to the seekers for the last two decades and more, in Bijapur District, on 6-6-1957 and thus a great void is created in the minds of many of his followers. I myself all along under his spiritual guidance, came not only to revere him but to take him as a father. His was a child-like simplicity and earnestness of purpose. He conveyed spiritua truths to us in an effective manner. His great attachment tol all of his *Sādhakās* and persons who came into his contact was remarkable. He made no distinction between any of his followers. He was always found dancing to the tune of the ' Maker ' completely forgetful of worldly surroundings. He was one with Divinity. Every one found something new in the way of his approach to *Sādhakās'* problems. Their spiritual and material welfare was always his first concern. Such a

dynamic personality He was.

Since last July (1956) he was gradually retreating from the world, and since March (1957) he was seen utterly detached from the world, always unmindful of environments. He developed acute Bronchitis which was gradually complicated into Bronchiectasis. He never took any medicine except some sedative linctus which did not interfere with his process of meditation. During his life time also, there were occasions of his grave illness when the doctors attending him and the people near to him were very much anxious about his life; but to their wonder '*Gurudeo*', on the strength of his spiritual powers, recovered successfully and thus the Medicos were left baffled. I had the good fortune of examining *Sri Gurudeo Ranade* just after his recent return from Allahabad to Nimbal on 30-4-1957 and I found on X'ray examination on 2-5-1957 at Nimbal that he had old-healed Tubercular lesions in both spices of the lungs and a patch of haziness on the Right Costophrenic angle, which also disappeared after about 12 days. His pulse was varying from 90 to 110 and he had irritant cough due to laryngitis. He was slowly getting emaciated. When he last came to me to Sholapur on 16-5-1957 and upon my request he consented to get X'rayed, and to my great surprise, I found that both the lungs were clear and the Rt. lower lobe showed Honey - combed appearance with markedly prominent hilar shadows, without taking any antibiotic treatment usually prescribed for such diseases. I explained to him the whole position of his illness. His dry hacking cough with severe laryingitis continued. Lungs were not showing any sign except a few rales (moist sounds). He was examined by a number of other eminent Doctors who also came to the conclusion that his Bronchiectasis also was clearing off both clinically and radiologically. In the end, His temperature subsided but he was markedly asthenic due to starvation. He developed aphonia and used to express his thoughts by signs. His breathing was perfectly regular and pulse was steady. His sputum was negative for acid fast organism throughout.

During the last 5 days before his departure (*Niryān*) he was completely detached from the world. He particularly got himself thoroughly examined 12 hours before he left his body, i-e, on 6th June 1957 at 10-30 A.M. by Dr. N. S. Paripatyagar of Sholapur as if, it seemed, to get confirmed that he was completely free from any disease. During those last 5 days, he did not take even a morsel of food or a drop of water but took particular care to get his bowels cleared by laxative. The Doctor on examination found the lungs clear and he did not find any other abnormility except extreme asthenia and it was astonishing for him to see that no faecal matter was lodged in the colon.

Revered Gurudeo, however, took his last sip of water just before. His gracious soul left the physique at 10-30 P. M to console *Śhrīmati* Kakusaheb ( Mrs. Ranade ) on her pathetic appeal to Him as He was fully conscious to the last breath.

Thus the revered and elevated Soul departed with a complete control over his disease, giving up the clear body back to the Creater, in the same way as did '*Kabir*' offer his body (*Chaddar*) unmolsted to ' GOD '.

"दास कबीर जतन करि ओढि । ज्यो त्यो घर दीनी चदरिया"

as was also done by the great Saint of *Karnatak*, *Śri Nimbargi Maharaj* when he said :

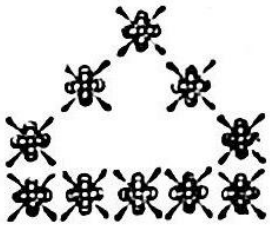
" अप्पा गुरुराया निन्नदु निनगे ओप्पितु "

meaning, " O Lord, the body given by you is handed over back to you as ( pure as ) it was.

Even after death, His body remained perfectly lustrous without any sign of *rigor Mortis* or *post mortem* lividity for the next 18 hours till the final holy rites. I noticed with astonishment that the tip of His nose was particularly shining and His iris was partially devoid of pigment and conjunctive, lustrous whitish In colour.

The revered Soul passed away in a joyous enjoyment of 'God' deeply engrossed in meditation and completely away from the material world, leaving behind Him, His great immortal works, on realisation of God, with full of practical experiences. He synthesised both East and West in devotional, spiritual, and mystic aspects of philosophy, having full faith and reliance on higher Forces.

*Gurudeo Dr. Ranade* lived '*Paramārth*' throughout his life. A minute observation of the Saint's life would reveal that the beginning and culmination of his life was spiritualism-realization of God ( *Swaroop - Sāksātkār* ). He used to say "Spiritualism has been the aim of my life; let it be its culmination also." *Sri Gurudeo Ranade*, the mystic saint, impressed the value of *Subeej Nāma* and meditation on the name of God imparted by a God-realised saint, the simplest and yet the most dynamic way of spiritual realisation in the present world of strife and struggle for existence. By practising '*Sădhana*' for over 50 years, he showed to the present world, full of distress and miseries, that meditation alone is the easiest and the surest way of attainment of God-realisation and spiritual happiness. The essential requisites, he stressed, as did the great saints of the past and the ancient Seers of yore (*Ŗśīs*), were the cultivation of moral virtues and elimination of vices and bad qualities, coupled with God-love and God-devotion and *Satsang*, before spiritual life could be fully realised. As a result of his dynamic personality, people from all classes and from all spheres of life, were attracted to him and revered him as their Spiritual Teacher'-*Sadguru*.' Thus this divine personality blessed hundreds of aspirants with the holy 'Mantra' (*Name*), ever guiding them on the Pathway to God.



## (18)
## Gurudeva as a Spiritual Gardener

*( By : Sri S. N. Deshpande )*

'*Nâma* is a symbol that carries divine power with it and Its *Smaraṇa* is a process of constant identification with God' exclaimed *Gurudeva* in one of his post-ecstatic monologues. His one pointed Divine personality could be perceived in a cross-section of his whole life as depicted in this cryptic but vibrant expression pregnant with his philosophy of the Spirit.

When I was first blessed by *Gurudeva* with an intimate interview in June 1934, I was beyond myself with a sense of exhileration, gratification and sublimation in life. Even before I entered the four walls of his holy abode of meditation at *Nimbâl*, the repeated thrilling musical exclamations of the Divine Name '*Nãrãyaṇa Nãrãyaṇa Nârãyaṇa*' maddened my soul as these God–intoxicated utterances penetrated my heart like the sudden flash of a rumbling column of light from the blue. The inexperienced young boy of twenty in me became extremely impatient and eager to see in person, the unseen

and unknown personality of *Gurudeva*. In my childish fancy I had mentally painted my own picture of *Gurudeva* as a tall, stout and an impressive figure like that of *Swāmi Vivekānānd*. Within a few moments I was surprisingly disillusioned to perceive a thin, lean and an emaciated figure of *Gurudeva* looking like a mere bony skeleton wrapped with lustrous silky skin. The fragrance and the splendour of his spiritual self was ebbing out of his glowing looks and his soothing words which in course of time, bathed me in unique compassion, love, kindness and inspiration never before experienced in my life. The child in me felt that it has regained its long lost mother.

I was on the threshold of joining the Agricultural College for shaping my academic career in life. After a few words of introductory talk, *Gurudeva* suddenly and most unexpectedly referred to my plan of joining the Agricultural College and endorsed the idea with the following thoughts. In the words of *Carlyle*, he advised us to become peasant saints. To earn the bread for the body we have to take to agriculture and to cater to the needs and aspirations of the spirit, we have to cultivate saintliness and reap the harvest of life Divine Hence agriculture and the culture of the spirit should form the two pillars of evolution of the body and the soul simultaneously.

Just as the peasant toils day in and day out to cultivate his land and add to the fertility of the soil, the saint in man has to keep a constant vigil on the Name of God, day and night, and make his encased self worthy of a flight into the fathomless firmament of the Divine Cosmos.

The double personality of a peasant and a saint in man has to grow side by side, in a homogeneous manner, reciprocally complimentary to each other. The human vehicle in flesh and blood has to develop as a peasant up to a certain limit,

only to outgrow the bonds of human limitations and transfigure itself into a vehicle of the Divine will. The agriculture has to sublimate itself into the culture and nurture of the spirit in man for the evolution of the individual self. This is possible only through a theo-centric process of surrender of the lower self and an unfoldment of a continuous awareness of the Divine Name and Form. Just as the vital process of breathing goes on reflexly inspite of our utter neglect and unawareness of the basic fact that sustains the spirit in this tenament of the flesh, so also the descending of the Divine Grace and mercy is continuous, inspite of human ignorance, neglect and indifference. The culture of the spirit sets in, when through the blessings of saints like *Gurudeva* the individual self catches the current of awareness of the Divine Name, and reciprocally attempts to ascend the ladder of spiritual life, to mingle with the descending Grace of the Divine. Then this process of spiritual awareness becomes as automatic and reflex as the act of physical breathing.

For inculcating in our daily life, the awareness of this double process of descent of the divine Grace and ascent of a devotee, through the method of meditation and dedication, we may be benefited by the guide lines suggested by *Gurudeva Ranade*, as a spiritual Gardener. In this context *Gurudeva* compared the growth of a plant with that of the sprouting of a seed of Divine Name, in the heart of a devotee. The growth of the seed and the seedling depends mainly on three factors. The innate potency of the seed to grow, the timely plantation in a well-cultivated and manured soil, and the opportune watering of the roots and the shoots after eradication of the weeds. It is the deepening growth of the unseen roots under ground that result in the exhuberance of the foliage above. The huge variety of colour, flower, fragrance and quality of flowers and fruits proclaim to the world the limitless and unimaginable power of the Divine Energy.

The critical knowledge and observation of *Gurudeva*

as a botanist and plant-pathologist could enable him to elucidate the comparison in deeper details. Meditation on the name of God, is like watering the roots of the plant and reading the spiritual literature and singing the glory of God are similar to the process of sprinkling the water on the foliage and branches of the plant, to regulate the process of transpiration. If the roots do not get the timely supply of water, the plant will not survive and if the process of transpiration is not regulated through external sprinkling of water, the excess evaporation of the water content will weaken the progress of the plant growth. Thus the relative importance of both the meditation and the singing of prayers and *bhajans* is made clear by the gardener in *Gurudeva*.

The imposing construction of *Gurudeva Mandir* with a huge garden round about, on the out-skirts of *Belgaum* reminds me of the fundamentals of spritual gardening as proposed by *Gurudeva*. An ardent prayer springs up in the solitude of my humble heart that the Spiritual Gardener may guide us on the right path to fulfil the purpose of गुरुदेव मंदीर— Gurudeva Mandir.

## (19)
## His Supernatural Power

*( By : V. S. Page )*

Following is the faithful account of an incident that took place at Sangli, which I described while giving a brief talk at the Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion, Belgaum, when I visited it last. ⁂

I attended a ceremony at Sangli in Ganpati Mandir when Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade and Dr. Radhakrishnan were present. Dr. Radhakrishnan was then the President of India. Thereafter, somehow, I was called to the Mal bungalow, a palace of the Rajesaheb of Sangli, by Shri Gurudev. I was specially called to place my views before him regarding Vedant philosophy, as given by Nischaldas, in his book Vicharsagar. This was because, I guess, somebody must have whispered into his ear about me. I was a bit surprised at this call. I was called at 3-00 p. m. in the Mal Bungalow. Accordingly I went

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⁂ Shri Page paid a visit to Gurudev Mandir, Belgaum on Makar-Sankrant day ( 14-1-1973)

there My maternal uncle, late Shri D. M. Varadkar, was with me. When I went there I found that Shri Gurudev was closetted in a room and was deeply immersed in writing something. The devotees sitting outside the room told me that nothing could be sure about his coming out though he had called me at 3-00 p. m. However, exactly at 3-00 p. m. Shri Gurudev came out. Though I had seen him many times earlier, the pose in which I saw him was rather startling. I was amazed at his mannerism. He held a pick-dan, a utensil for spitting, in his right hand. Under his left arm-pit there was a bundle of shirts. Perhaps, he wanted to change shirts within a short span of time. He wore dhoti in a loose fashion. As soon as he came out he asked me, " Are you Mr. Page ? " I said. " Yes, I am Page. " A thought crossed my mind as I was looking at him. I thought : Is this a learned man whose manners seem to be quite eccentric, if not anything else ? He started going out along with me to the main hall in the palace. As soon as the thought mentioned above crossed my mind he looked at me, almost stared at me, and asked me a question, " Have you read ' Contemporary Philosophers ', a Government of India publication ? " I said, " No, I have not read it. " He said, " Read it. " I asked, " What I am supposed to read in it; what in particular ? " Shri Gurudev said, " I have written an article in it. Do read that article. You will find answers to your questions. " Then I was silent. I need not tell what happened thereafter. We went in the main hall. I gave a brief talk. Shri Gurudev was very much pleased to hear me and he encouraged me by words of blessings. He told me that exposition of Vedant doctrines. as I gave, was very correct and he was pleased with my talk. Thereafter I returned home. I then procured the book he asked me to read. I read his article. There I found the explanation of his mannerism. A reader can profitably go through that article. In short, the reason for his behaviour is given by Dnyaneshwar in his commentary on Geeta, briefly, " वेडिवे माजी दडे महिमे भेणे ". I hope I need not write much.

Though Shri Gurudev behaved like an ordinary man in this world, his every action was purposeful, and the purpose was purely spiritual one. Without a shred of doubt he read the thought in my mind and gave proper answer to me. This is not possible for an ordinary Yogi. It is only those who have identified themselves with universal consciousness, who can read correctly the minds of others and give proper answers. This is an incident which has left an indelible impression on my mind of the grandeur of Shri Gurudev's spiritual height. I have related the same as briefly as I could. Readers are free to draw their conclusions. I can say this much that I have faithfully recorded the event though it took place many years back, may be in 1950-51.

## (20)

## Gurudeo as I saw Him

*By : Prof. P. M. Upadhye*

It is said that a man gets a new-birth in spiritual life after his mere contact with the Guru and this is what has happened in my case in the real sense of the term. It was the blessed day, twenty four years ago, when I saw Gurudeo for the first time in life. I was having dark night of my soul hankering after the day-light and lo, at once, a new divine light in the form of Gurudeo flashed forth before me, it was not the heat but it was the moon-light soothing my soul by the presence of the nectar-like rays of the moon in the form of Gurudeo. More wonderful thing that I experienced was that I surrendered myself to Him and his divine touch and divine look filled my entire body and I lost myself for a minute. I still remember this inexpressible state of my mind in his presence. He did not say anything to me, but everything that I needed to begin *Śādhakâvasthā* was conveyed to me. It was strength to me to lead the spiritual life and I have been trying in my humble way to follow it.

This is how I saw Gurudeo twenty four years ago. After

my first visit to Him, I was once again attracted towards him and I used to meet him often. In the meetings he spoke few words, Words of wisdom, full of divine life and it could electrify any layman near him. I was such a fortunate soul near him. He used to explain the source of vedanta sutras or a Ṛgvedic hymn on Pūsan. I could hardly understand him because he used to speak indirectly about his divine life through the words therein. It was beyond my reach because I was far away from such life. I was a man of flesh and blood. He was a superman, a real Sadguru who inspired the Sãdhakas like me for spiritual life and we know that Gurudet spent his whole life for this mission and he lived for this Divine mission, till he breathed his last.

Whenever I saw Him, I alaways noticed divine ligh around him. I also thought that I was as if meeting *Yājnavalkya* of the Upanisadic times or I was meeting saint Ekanatha. All the divine qualities were seen in Him and I looked upon him as one such *Vibhuti* as described in the 10th chapter of the *Gītā*.

He was the embodiment of knowledge and faith to us. All the characteristics of an ideal *bhakta* or a teacher as described in ancient literature were also found in Him. His love was grace.his speech was knowledge,his touch was divine, his sight was nectar-like rays. This was the feeling in my heart. Whenever I remember Him and his words, I am still thrilled. Nimbal, the very spiritual seat of his divine life, is a great solace to many sãdhakas like me and I pray to Him to shower His grace on all the sãdhakas to lead the spiritual life. May He take us from darkness to light ! May He take us from death to immortality !

## (21)
## Gurudev As I Saw Him

*( G. V. Tulapule )*

*( A free English rendering by Prof. D. G. Kulkarni,* M. A. *of the original Marathi article from Mr. G. V. Tulpule )*

It was in the year 1908 that I was first aoquainted with Gurudev. I had then joined the Deccan College, Poona and he was a Fellow there, teaching Sanskrit Poetry to our Class. I looked upon him then mostly in my capacity as one interested in moral and spiritual Philosophy. But when I was initiated by Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj in 1911, I began to regard him in my capacity as a *Sādhak*, and began to regard him as an ideal *Sādhak*. My fortunate contact with him went on ripening into a close intimacy right upto his demise in 1957. During this long period of nearly fifty years, I had the unique good fortune of studying the various facets of rich, brilliant, pure and purifying personality. I give below some of my reminiscences of Gurudev's life and personality :-

a) His wonderful confidence and conviction regarding his thoughts as seen in his casual conversation :-

i) In the year 1914, I went to see him at the Deccan

College, Pune, He had to go out for a few minutes and so he opened Dnaneshwari and asked me to read it till he returned The page contained the following verse from the commentary on B. G. 9/2.

सुखाच्या पाऊटी । येईजे जयाचिये भेटी ।
भेटल्या कीर मिठी । सुखातेही पडे ।।

The main idea in it is that a *Sādhak* climbs the path of God-realization by the steps of spiritual bliss and finally he becomes one with the bliss itself. I brought this to the notice of Gurudev and asked, " Is there a degree of rising spiritual bliss even in the *Sādhak* State ? ". He very gently said " Yes, Ganpatrao. If it were not so, how would it be possible to climb this difficult path of God-realisation ?" Later on, in due course I read his books and was convinced that spiritual bliss was the Central principle of the Science of God-realisation.

ii) During his stay at Nimbal, I once asked, " How is one to know that his spiritual *Sādhana* has reached perfection?" In reply to my question Gurudev immediately quoted the following verses from Dasabodha -

" पापाची खंडना झाली । जन्मयातना चुकली । ऐसी स्वये प्रचीति आली । म्हणजे बरे ।। मुख्य देवासी ओळखिले । मी कोण हें जाणलें । आत्मनिवेदन झालें । म्हणजे वरे ।। हें ब्रम्हांड कोठोनि आलें । कासयाचे उभारिले । मुख्य कर्त्यासि ओळखिलें । म्हणजे वरे ।।

In these lines we are told that God is the only Reality, the Self and universe are illusory. One must know this by personal experience and this experience annihilates all Sin and suffering and becomes a mark of perfection of spiritual life. Both these doctrines are clearly reflected in Gurudev's writings.

iii) When I was with him at Allahabad in 1936, I asked him, " We read and hear that there are different ways to God-realisation such as Karma, Jnana, Bhakti and Dhyana. Are there really such different ways ? OR, is there only the one way, that of *Nāmasmarana*, as practised by us ? ". In reply to my question, Gurudev lifted up his hands and bringing them down as a sign of his conviction ( to carry conviction ) he said,

" There is no other path to attain God - realisation." He further explained that *Nāmasmarana* - and Self-realisation attained through it-is the only way of God-Realisation. There is none other. In his books, especially the one on Karnatak mysticism, Gurudev has sung eloquent praises of *Nāmasmarana* making it absolutely clear that *Nāma* is God ( God in posse ), that *Nāma* is the symbol of the Divine carrying spiritual energy and that the process of *Nāmasmarana* is the process of identification with God.

b) When one considers Gurudev's devotion, love and respect as well as his gratitude towards his Guru, one is reminded of Dnanadeva's commentary on आचार्योपासना in B. G. 13-7 in Dnaneshwari.It is said that a devotee attains liberation by developing intensely any one emotion about God. When I asked Gurudev, " which particular feeling about God or relationship with Him should one prefer ? " he said " The devotee should regard God as his Guru. This relationship between the devotee and his God-this intense emotion–is the best ". Gurudev always looked upon his Guru as God incarnate. To look upon one's Guru as God and to regard God as one's Guru are practically the two sides of the same coin. I cannot help feeling that only on account of his incomparable devotion to his own Guru he gave this reply to my question.

c) Once he mentioned two very significant points regarding the Guru's function towards his disciple. (i) The

mother feeds the foetus in the womb through the anbilical Chord. In the same way, the Guru spiritually feeds his disciple through *Nāma*. I remember another occasion even more significant than this. In the year 1936, a certain professor had come to Nimbal and he and I were talking to Gurudev. After some time, the Professor left and then Gurudev said to me, " Just as the mother nourishes her baby with her milk, the Guru also nourishes his disciple spiritually with his spiritual power. This is an actual experience, Ganpatrao. Wnat greater authority can there be than experience ? In the past I did not impart *Nāma* or initiate *Sādhaks* and so I could not experience this. But, when I started initiating aspirants I began to experience this. " Towards the end ot 1920 Gurudev attained the spiritual height necessary for initiating others. But as long as his senior *Gurubandhu*, Sri Amburao Maharaj alias Baba, was living, he refrained from imparting *Nāma*. It was only after the demise of Sree Baba in December1933that Gurudev started initiating others. This incident amply reflects his extreme humility and modesty.

d) Gurudev very rarely spoke about his experiences or about his spiritual height. Others too did not generally dare to ask him about it. Nevertheless, he expressed his self-confidence occasionally, especially in the company of two or three intimate associates. In this respect, the following incidents would he found significant :—

i) Gurudev could easily read the character of a man immediately on seeing him. I had been observing this since 1913. So I once asked him, "How can you know this?" Thereupon he replied with a smile " Ganpatrao, should one not come to know even this much after practising *Nāma* for such a long time?. "

ii) As has been said above, Gurudev attained the

spiritual heights necessary for initiating others, towards the end of 1920. Even then he did not start initiation till 1934. Once, he appeared to have been somewhat perturbed, probably because some one had made an improper remark about this matter. Without directly referring to the person and the remark concerned, Gurudev said to me, when we were alone, " The authority to initiate has not to be given by another person. In fact, nobody is capable of giving it. The aspirant concerned knows for himself if he is worthy of initiating; and when one attains that authority no permission is necessary from any one. "

e) Once I asked Gurudev, " What is your mental condition when your meditation reaches its highest pitch" ? He replied, " *Nāma*, different sounds and colours and lights as well as forms and bliss are all fused together so completely that it is impossible to experience them separately in this state. Believe me, Ganpatrao, believe me, even when two hours pass in this state, one feels as if only ten minutes have passed " On all these three occasions there was no third person present.

f) Since the time I came into contact with him I could easily experience his extreme humility, his sympathy and compassion, his readiness to help others and indeed all those qualities mentioned in B. G. 7-11. My reverence towards him was the result of these virtues in him and it wenr on increasing as time passed. For, his *Sādhana* and spiritual experiences grew rapidly and side by side there was growth of these virtues. In fact, these virtues were the visible signs of his God-realisation. Indeed, Gurudev was born with natural qualities very favourable to his God-realisation, and therefore, on account of his spiritual tendency, these virtues were seen in his life right from the beginning. In this respect one is reminded of the following lines from the 18th Chapter of Dnyaneshwari regarding Sattwic knowledge -

तयापरी जया ज्ञाना । शिवादि तृणावसाना । इया भूतव्यक्ति भिन्ना । नाडळती ।। आरिसा पाहू जाता कोडे । जैसे पाहतेचि पाहिजे पुढे । तैसे ज्ञेय लोटोनि पडे । ज्ञाताचि जै ।। पुढे तेचि सात्त्विक ज्ञान । जे मोक्षलक्ष्मीचे भुवन ( ज्ञा. अ. १८, ५३३, ३६ व ३७).

This attitude of non-differentiation, i. e. of looking upon others as oneself, culminated into the unitive experience of seeing Brahman everywhere, as a result of his long and dedicated *Sâdhana* and he attained the rare state of ' सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रम्ह. ' This state naturally perfected all his virtues like अमानित्व.

g) I propose to mention two or three letters of Gurudev that bear out the truth of the saying ' सहज बोलणें हित उपदेश ' ( Even a casual talk is valuable advice. ) How can I do justice to what an ordinary person like myself saw in the brilliant life of this Philosopher-Saint during the long contact of nearly 50 years ?.

i) When I got my M. A. degree, I said to Gurudev in 1914, " I have to discharge some family responsibilities. If I get a fairly well-paid job, I shall be able to discharge these properly. In 1915 I secured a post of the Superintendent of Post Offices. I wrote to Gurudev about this good news In his reply of congratulations he wrote " God fulfils all our pious wishes– ' सत्यसकल्पाचा दाता भगवान. ' In this reply was implied the gentle warning of keeping one's desires meritorious.

ii) In 1915, when I was a Professor at Ajmer, there was some small growth in my spiritual experience and I wrote to him about this. He wrote back, " Strike the iron while it is hot ".

iii) Sometimes he gave me a stern warning, of course

out of affection. In a letter or two I had mentioned some grandiloquent thoughts. He wrote in reply " Do not entertain morbid ideals which you can never attain. "

iv) In 1942, when I was Deputy Post Master General at Lahore, Gurudev wrote to me "I remember you often and in my meditations. " I could not understand his intention, but I cannot describe the great satisfaction I felt on reading the letter.

h) Once, while I was walking with Gurudev, he said as if to himself, " Maharaj had become one with the universe. How bitterly Nature must have mourned when Maharaj passed away ". I did not grasp the meaning of these words. But they went deep down into my heart.

# " गुरुदेव को जैसा मैंने देखा "

## ( गिरीश चन्द्र शर्मा )

मनोज्ञमधुराचारा: प्रियपेशलवादिन:
विवेचितार: कार्याणां निर्णेतार: क्षणादपि: (योगवसिष्ठ).

महात्मा रानडे मनोज्ञ थे. अपने और पराये मन को जानने वाले थे. (मन: +ज्ञ) मन के ज्ञाता अर्थात् 'साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च' परम ज्ञानवान थे. प्रिय और मधुरभाषी थे. कार्यों का विपद रूप से विवेचन करने वाले थे. और क्षण में ही निर्णय कर लेते थे. वे संस्कृत, ग्रीक, इंग्लिश, हिन्दी, मराठी, कन्नड़ आदि भाषाओं के कितने विद्वान थे यह मेरे अनुमान के वाहर की वात है. उनका वाह्य आचरण कितना मधुर था उसके कुछ संस्मरण लिखता हूं.

अवसे लगभग 29 वर्ष पहले की बात है. जनवरी 1948 में उनसे मिला था. करीव 15 दिन उनकी आज्ञानुसार अध्यात्म विदयामंदिर में ठहरा था. मिलने का समय रात को सात वजे निश्चित हुआ था. मैं वहाँ श्री प्रकाश चंद्र गौतम एडवोकेट इलाहावाद हाईकोर्ट के साथ जिस कमरे में उनकी बैठक होती थी, पहुँचा था. कमरे में केवल फर्श बिछा था. एक ओर श्री गुरुदेव बैठे थे, सामने कुछ विद्यार्थी बैठे थे. सभी विद्वान थे. उनमें से एक श्री प्रल्हाद कुलकर्णी थे. मैंने घूसते ही भूमि पर सिर रखकर प्रणाम किया. उन्होंने अपने पास बठने को कहा. मेरा उनका पहले से कोई परिचय नहीं था. उन्होंने पूछा

'Who are you?', मैंने उन्हें याद दिलाई कि एक बार कैप्टेन परमात्मा शरण गौतम आपके पास आये थे. उन्होंने मेरा एक गीत गाया था 'कोई लाख भुलाना चाहे मैं कूटस्थ न भूल जाऊंगा'. इस पर आपनें कहा था "Oh! It is a revolution in Vedanta. Who has written it ? Send him to me."उनको तुरंत याद आ गई और बोले "Yes, yes". फिर उन्होंने पूछा " Do you sing ? " मैंने कहा "Yes, Sir, I do sing. " उन्होंनें कहा 'गाओ'. मैंने तुरंत एक कबीर दास का भजन ताली और चुटकी बजा बजाकर गाना आरंभ किया. "साधो सहज समाधि भलो". एक बार पूरा पद गाने के बाद फिर गाया, फिर गाया, वे सुनते सुनते अघाते नहीं थे. कई दिन तक गाता ही रहा – उस दरबार का मैं ही अकेला गायक था. फिर प्रश्नोत्तरों की झडी लगती थी. कभी वे मुझसे पूछते "Do you understand what you sing?" कभी कभी मैं 'yes' कह देता तो मुझे विवेचन करना पड़ता. फिर वह उसका कुशलतापूर्वक विवेचन करते. कभी प्रेमोन्मत्त होकर कहते " Sharma! see. " 'बैठत उठत कबहुँ नहि छूटै ऐसी तारी लागी', 'आंखि न मूंदू कान न रूंधू' भक्तजन ध्यान दें. इस प्रकार वे कभी स्वयं, कभी मुझको ब्रह्मानंद, और भक्तिसागर मे गोता लगवाते, कुछ पता नहीं रहता था कि कौन वे हैं औरकौन मैं हूँ. उस प्रत्यक्ष साक्षात् ब्रहम के संस्मरण मेरे पास केवल भावावेश और आँसुओं की धार है.

' भला हो तेरा ओ, रुला देने वाले
थमे आँसुओं को बहा देने वाले '

गुरुदेव के देखने का जहाँ तक प्रश्न है, ' वह देखै जिसकी डोर लगी हो हरि से ' निर्गुण,-सगुण का भेद जिनका मिट चुका हो वे ही उनके मर्म को समझ सकते थे. परमार्थ सोपान नामक ग्रंथ का संकलन हो रहा था-प्रात: 7-11 बजें तक पहली बैठक, फिर 4-6 बजे सायं दूसरी, फिर रात 7 से 10 बजे तक तीसरी बैठक होती थी जिसमें

कभी कभी कालेजों के प्रोफेसर लोग भी आते थे – एक दिन हमारा समागम चल रहा था. मैं गाता था, बीच बीच में हमारा उनका संवाद चलता था. इसी बीच में प्रो. देवी दयाल शुक्ल, वार्डन हिन्दी होस्टल, मुझसे बोले "यह कैसे कहते हो? कभी सगुण से निर्गुण पर चले जाते हो तो निर्गुण से सगुण पर आ जाते हो ".इस प्रश्नपर प्रोफेसर रानडे और मैं हँस पडे, फिर मैंने शुक्ल जी से कहा कि यह बात मैं नहीं बता सकता, आप प्रोफेसर रानडे से पूछिये तब वे उधर को सन्मुख हुए. फिर वे (गुरुदेव) करीब $\frac{1}{2}$ घंटे तक उन्हें समझाते रहे. मैं जब कभी पद गायन, या दोहा, श्लोक आदि गाता, तो तुरंत वे पीछे बैठे विद्यार्थियों को निर्देश देते कि 'Note down, part III, chapter V' आदि. इस प्रकार हम सबका उपासना, विचार विमर्श, और सम्पादन का कार्य चलता रहता था. एक दिन डा. कौल ने मुझे बताया, देखिये हमारे गुरुदेव बहुत उच्च कोटि के महात्मा हैं. मगर लोग समझते नहीं हैं कि हमारे पूज्य गुरुदेव ने करीब 18 वर्ष से 'अन्न नहीं खाया है, केवल चाय पर ही रहते हैं'. संत रानडे एक दोहा मुझसे बारबार कहते थे.

मनुआं मेरो मरि गयो, दुर्बल भयौ शरीर,
पीछे पीछे हरि फिरै, कहत कबीर कबीर ।।

बडे मुग्ध होकर मुझसे बार बार कहते 'शर्मा ! पीछे पीछे हरि फिरें कहत कबीर कबीर'. उस समय उनका मुख देखने लायक होता था – नूतन बालवत् भोलापन झलकता था. निमग्न हो जाते थे मानो कबीर का आवेश आ गया हो. उनका आचरण मधुर ही नही विचित्र भी था. हर मनुष्य को समझना कठिन था. मेरी समझ में: उनके लिये यह कहावत चरितार्थ होती है 'वहि सर्वसमाचारा अन्त सर्वार्थशीतला:' इसके अतिरिक्त स्थानाभाव के कारण अधिक नहीं लिखा जा सकता। बहुत दिनों की घटना होने के कारण कुछ भूल हो गई हो, उनके लिये पाठक क्षमा करें.

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